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PREFACE.

One more version of **Sri Gita** — this humble endeavour of love in the **Service of Truth & Science**—will justify itself with the discerning public, *both Hindu and Non-Hindu*, for its perspicuity, catholicity, bold synthesis, unambiguity and unconventional presentation of this sublime theme. There are very learned commentaries and translations by great minds—both modern and ancient—but the common man of the world, with his scanty knowledge of the ancient lore can hardly be guided by them in his work-a-day life. To render the teaching self-contained and self-explanatory without wasting much scholarship, copious background data from the Upanishads and other sources have been added as General Introduction. While the trappings of the dialogue form have not been allowed to interrupt the flow of the exposition, all the Slokas or groups of connected verses (excepting Chap. I. and ten slokas of Chap. II. with some verses reporting Sanjaya) have been freely rendered, along with elucidatory comments—the aim being to convey a precise, full, cogent and categorical import of the Teaching, than attempt a verse to verse literal translation of which there are too many. **The Message of the Gita is the best balm for the modern World,** now distracted by differences and discords. Eminently practical in outlook, (It came to solve an universal crisis, then), it is the safest anchorage for man, struggling hard against the mighty onslaughts of Samsara, greatly aggravated by Science. Modern man is not only deluded as regards his origin and end, but also with regard to his means, and his plight is worse than that of Arjuna who had only his "ignorance" to contend with. Unless the reader has crossed the Rubicon to join the godless creed, all his **doubts will give place to the joy of a firm faith,** developing the courage to renounce in advance, all of which misfortune or death will deprive him, and he will so limit his desires, that what he seeks for himself, will be reasonably secured for all others too. And no more, will his daily task done for a living become the burdensome prelude to the escapist and wasteful forms of amusements in which he now indulges in his remaining hours, which should legitimately be devoted to his Spiritual Needs by following the Gita Way than which there is no more potent mind-tamer and tranquiliser in the world.

Inspired by that monumental work–*the Gita of Aurobindo*–to which the following pages owe much, and designed to be an effective antidote to the fast developing scepticism of our

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times, weighty thoughts of the Seers like, Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, Ruskin, Emerson, Tolstoy, Tagore, Sri Ramakrishna etc., have been incorporated as **Highlights** to this edition. Like the string that binds flowers and pearls into a garland, this is a pious labour of editing the imperishable thoughts, in a new setting and style, to give solace to the hearts of millions, stung by self-wrought suffering. Though insufficient for the practice of **Raja Yoga,** the details about this *Royal Science of the Spirit based on Vivekananda's work,* will inspire the reader, to seek a proper guide to initiate him into this spiritual field of infinite potential. The avowed object of this edition is to neutralise the modern anti-spiritual revolt, and the following will be deemed not only topical but a welcome feature. **Man Vs. Plant and Animal Kingdoms,** *based on Tagore* is a detailed comparative assessment which will convince the reader of Man's Divinity, Dignity and Purpose in life, despite the callous denial of same by Materialism. **Nationalism and Science—the Armageddon,** also *drawn from Tagore,* will soften those who go hysterical about the achievements of Science and the State, despite the nerve-racking plight to which they have led mankind. *A critical analytical study of the War of Ideologies leading to the present World Crisis* has been made from two further angles in (i) **Modern Crisis and the Gita Way** *based on Tolstoy's Kingdom of God* and (ii) **Libertarian Naturalism vs. Dialectic Communism** *following Devonport's Dignity of Man*—both establishing that never before have the teachings of the Gita been so relevent as now. **An Argument** has been added giving a succinct and logical resume of the whole Gita Philosophy based on the Lord's declarations fully quoted or referenced. Summarised in the Argument as well as interspersed throughout the pages of the book are *sharp comments, pin-pointing* **the Limitations and Dangers of Science and Materialism.** But petty-minded man sins against God and Science, becoming a self-willed victim like the silk-worm in its cocoon to a doom of his choice and making. Intoxicated and duped with the expectation of plenty and power—a hope just as impossible as all can have the lucky hit in a lottery—whole masses are forcibly converted into the godless creed, installing in their vacant heart-thrones *Kamini-Kanchan,* Woman and Gold, the two obstacles between man and his goal. **Sri Gita is our sole Refuge.**

JAI GITA !

Vignan Mandir,
Sermadevi S. Ry.,

D. V. RAMAN

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A COST PROBLEM

for the Ministries of

EDUCATION, SCIENTIFIC CULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economy Vs. Squandermania

SCIENCE dominates Life. Despite costs and efforts, we have poor returns, because of Defective Equipments which are never good for the purpose and more defective Teaching Spirit. Special Science Grants of Rs. 50,000 to Individual High Schools serve no purpose, mostly converted into brick and mortar, while a moiety converts Schools into dumping grounds. Valuable equipments lie unused, for want of a devoted hand. Costly Apparatuses which alone are effective in teaching, become impossible or wasteful to equip each Individual School with. Projectors, Telescopes, Microscopes etc., sparingly used in one School where their utility can but reach a few, and lying idle most of the time are a National waste. The full exploitation of each apparatus by utmost use to benefit the maximum number of Schools and the Public is an imposed national necessity. **A Centralised Vignan Mandir** in charge of a full-time lover of Science is a ***must*** to make science education effective at minimum cost and time.

The latter named Two Ministries are setting up Vignan Mandirs in rural parts to create interest in Science among the people, while the first named is giving large sums for the same object. What harm in co—ordinating the two separate efforts, to save ***Foreign Exchange*** and reap real results? Why quarantine the proposed Vignan Mandir from Educational Institutions in rural parts? This solid idea in concrete form is the Multi-Purpose Vignan Mandir, Sermadevi, a Potential centre for Self-education - to serve the many schools and the Public alike—taking Science knowledge to our Villages—securing all the advantages of economy in conserving our borrowed resources—pooling same for Top-quality Apparatuses only—avoiding all wasteful duplication of Idle equipment-

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and ensuring quick results, coupled with the certainty of the dissemination of correct knowledge, to a far greater number of Schools and the Public.

The Mandir is a Gift, an Offering of Love to the Nation. Loyalty conflicting with the dictates of Conscience freed me to serve the people. When the State offered Special Science Grants, reacting instinctively to the utter futility of the Scheme as at present administered, I worked at the idea of a Centralised Science Hall for the popularisation of General Scientific Knowledge and the Mandir at Sermadevi took three years and Rs. 20,000 to set it up (1957). I have approached all the Schools in the outlying parts and the Public to use this Free Service and also addressed the Central and State Authorities *to examine this idea, now in concrete form* in the interest of National Economy as they are also setting up such Mandirs—all in vain. Human Nature needs some sort of pressure even to accept a proffered benefit. Let our Educational Authorities and N. E. S. Officials identify themselves with the Free Service and encourage the Schools and the Public to resort to it.

The delay in giving effect to the proposal, approved by the D. E. O. and D. H. O. to house the local Board High School, in the readily available site with compound walls, well and sheds, opposite the Mandir, has been depriving the Pupils of a sound practical Science Education, in spite of the well equipped Mandir whose precious Apparatuses are lying idle for want of use. Also, the five acres of land gifted by the Mandir on 26—12—57 as Play-Ground for the High School remain unutilised, owing to the same delay. *Will the education Minister and Authorities intervene to obviate this double calamity?*

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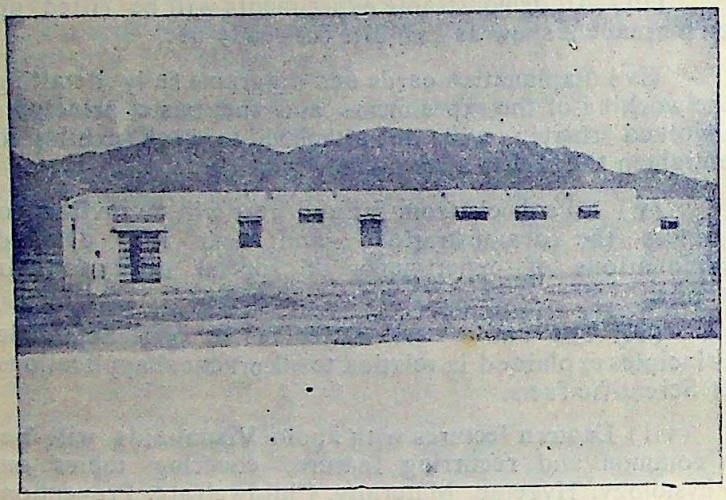

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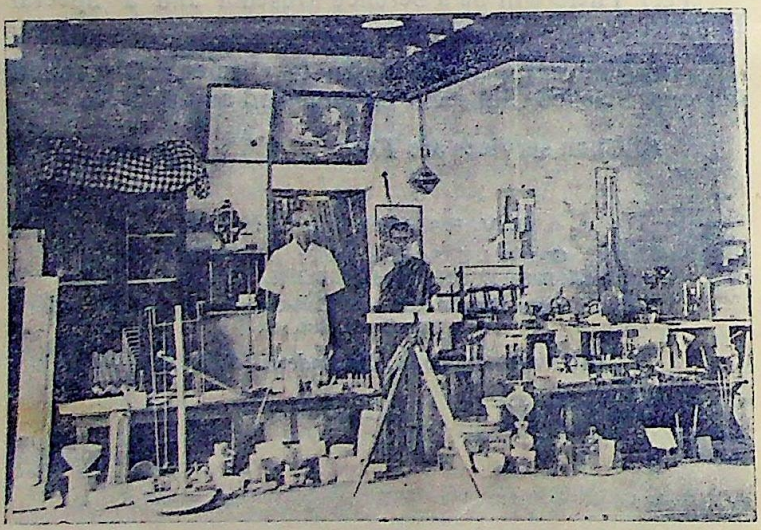

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GITA PHILOSOPHY

General Introduction

SRI GITA is the Soul's song of the victory of good over evil and sin, the Lord being the friend and guide. This is an age of Science, and every Faith is being tested on the touchstone of Reason. The marvellous achievements of Science, in enormously increasing man's sway over external nature, has made him disdain and lack the basic knowledge about himself, his relation to the world and to the Author of all. The conflicting idealogy of today arises from the overweening scientific concept, that man is body and mind alone, denying the essentially free spirit and divine agent that he is. Because of the prestige of Science as a source of power and wealth, many have come to regard the scientific concept as the full account of Reality. This widespreading scepticism to the values of our divine personality has led to unrealistic beliefs, and man has succumbed to the temptations of evil, which Science has presented to him sufficiently strcng and sufficiently frequent. Deprived of the spiritual standard to refer his actions and thoughts, everyone thinks he is right, inspite of the enormous sufferings caused thereby. In the past, perpetrators of wrongs committed them with a distinctly uneasy conscience, but today, with the enlightened scientific background, even whole nations are able to carry on their outrages in the conviction that they are acting for humanity's highest good and progress. The need of the hour is the discipline of human nature, through **a course of practical philosophy and natural religion,** by understanding and interpreting aright this new picture of the Universe afforded by Science, assessing same against the ancient thoughts which it has not only challenged, but also succeeded in uprooting to some extent. The following pages, it is hoped, will arrest this perverted new knowledge from sowing doubts and distrust, and starting fissures in the sacred and cherished ideals of the peoples of this ancient divine world.

Human knowledge has become unmanageably vast, and facts have replaced understanding, no longer generating

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wisdom. Between knowledge and need has risen a big barrier, in the shape of the high birth-rate of scholarly terminology, rendering humanisation of knowledge almost impossible. Among the historical religions of the world, Hinduism is unique in many respects. Having no human origin or founder, it has no creed. Its freedom from dogmas and its all-inclusiveness have made it the most tolerant of all religions. While the cosmology of other religions do not fit in at all, Hindu Cosmology anticipates and agrees with modern scientific conclusions to a surprising degree. The strangeness of its intellectual landscapes and the vast mass of its literature, some most profound and some even profane, uncoordinated and uncorrelated, bewilder the common mind. Its sacred lore of old — the Vedas and the Upanishads are unintelligible to the many, despite the learned commentaries, because of their lofty pitch, archaic language and extreme terseness. In Hinduism, philosophy and religion are never divorced from each other. Indian thought always admitted the supremacy of the Spirit over mind and matter — the human mind and will, when duly informed by the Spirit had unlimited scope and potency. Sri Gita, the premier basic text of Hinduism, enjoys immense popularity and authority. In plain and noble language, it unfolds the philosophical system of Non-difference towards which modern Scientific thought is getting itself attuned. Its lofty declarations, its sublime aspirations and its pure and tender piety have been acclaimed with outburst of delight and praise by the great minds of the world. Its teachings are of universal validity and it is a record of universal experience. Truth being one and eternal, Sri Gita in human voice attempts to explain the same to the human mind, *dealing with the practical problems and doubts of all men at all times.* The approach of a critic is different from the study of a devotee : the former is bound by his limited reason, while the latter soars on the wings of his unfettered love and faith.

The meta-physical forms and local examples, inevitable in such communications, have to be overlooked, yet Sri Gita has very little that is merely local and temporal. The philosophical terms and religious symbols, the dogmas and creeds current at the time and used in the Gita are not to be

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too much pressed but adjusted to conform to the experiences of the developing humanity and dealt with in the spirit of one keen on seeing *the enduring truths of spiritual experiences revealed* therein. The doctrine of the Gita covers much wider ground than the Upanishads: it draws together and harmonises all systems of the different schools of thought of Hinduism. No other work in the whole world reconciles and unifies human spiritual attainments as Sri Gita does.

"If Man cannot apprehend God in this life, then it is the greatest calamity for him." — (*Upanishad.*) "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. *It has been the solace of my life: it will be the solace of my death.*" — (Schopenhauer.) "There can be no better guide to peaceful existence in this world, no better preparation for a happy end than the Gita". The loftiest philosophy of the West is at best only an idealism of Reason, but that of the Gita is abundant with light and life, inculcating a faith in the divine origin of man, and stimulating his efforts towards a re-union and re-incorporation with the divinity as the sole object of every action and exertion of man. Sri Gita is rich and many sided in thought, and hence lends itself easily to various interpretations, by throwing particular emphasis on one such aspect to the exclusion of the others: but the Gita has no absolute separate preference of one over the other aspects. Though its framework or background is local and temporal, the issues raised are all universal, transcending time, creed, caste or country. It manifests a vast synthetic mind and a rich synthetic experience. Most of all, **it is eminently practical**.

Sharing the anonymity that India wraped around her creations, Sri Gita has given room for controversy, in which great scholars have embroiled their intellect as to its date, authorship, motive, background, doublesense, allegory, and last but not the least, its competency to inspire and maintain a high ethical standard. Has not its text undergone much revision and expansion, not to say of the interpolations at the hands of sectarian votaries? Was Gita not the reaction of a Kshatrya against the uncompromising pacifism of

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Gautama ? Does not Gita reflect an apparent ethical contrariness, in that man (Arjuna) takes what seems to be the higher moral stand, while God (Krishna) argues for war and slaughter, on the shifty ground, that Soul is unkillable, and individuality unreal? Finding that religion was weakening his country, does not prince Krishna attempt to shake the Hindu Soul out of the enervating quietism of Buddhist piety into a willingness to fight for the country – in short, is not Gita an incitement to violence ? Yet, the Apostle of Non-violence, the father of the Indian Nation, only swore by Sri Gita as the source of the inspiration of his life and conduct. Apart from the minor issues, one has to meet and convince the reader, that there is nothing incongruous and inappropriate in the great battle-field as the background to expound the loftiest philosophy, and that the contrariness and complexity of human life and its actions in the two different planes—one mundane and the other spiritual — continue to cause confusion in the minds of some readers, though the Gita cured the hero Arjuna of all his doubts.

The 47 verses of Chapter I called the Yoga of Arjuna's Despondency, with another 9 slokas of Chapter II describe the battle scene and the occasion for this sacred discourse. We are in the Fifth Act-last Scene of the great Epic, Mahabaratha, where the rivalry between blood-cousins, the Kurus and the Pandavas had all along been growing, and in which the cruelty, injustice and villainy of the Kurus had sorely tried the patience of the suffering Pandavas, that at last both the sides decided to force the issues and settle them on the field of battle. Vast armies had been collected by the contending parties and arranged in battle formation : the commanders had taken their respective positions, with instructions for the proper disposition of their men, and the signal for battle given, by blowing their conches. Arjuna too, as the commander of the Pandavas, had mounted his chariot, fully armed and taken up his position. Just then, as a bolt from the blue, he lays down his arms and decides not to fight! Such infamous conduct at any time would stand suspect as high treason and treachery. Among the arguments advanced by Arjuna, the one most coveted by the critics — yet having

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the least foothold in his inner being, was his plea of "conscientious objection to take life. Would any conscientious objector ever command an army and lead it into battle line? Arjuna's conscience was of a different mould as his subsequent conduct proved. His strange resolve was a sudden whim, born of egoistic moha, that made his limbs fail, while a fever of grief burned into his very soul. This onslaught of madness, not being superficial, could not be dislodged by an appeal to his reason, to his sense of justice, honour, fame and fairplay. The advice to live and act in the world, as hitherto he had done, having failed, and finding that Arjuna's bewilderment had its roots in his ignorance of the true nature of the Self in man, the Lord began to *expound the fundamentals of Life and Existence* which cured Arjuna of his malady. His objection to kill arose because the would-be victims were his kith and kin. His faulty stand could be likened to a well seasoned judge who all along had been administering the law, including the award of capital punishment, but who on seeing his own son in the dock on a charge of cold murder, himself gets unnerved, and losing mental balance, began to excuse himself from passing the same sentence on his son which he did not hesitate to pass on others. Conscientious objection under these circumstances is a fraud. The pragmatic mind's greatest obsession is death as a negation of all that is good in life, and hence the act of killing raises such horror in all human beings, acting in the material plane and rightly so. But death is as essential a step as birth to which it leads. Being an inevitable change, it must be as much welcome to the Soul as sleep to a tired body and mind. Such a belief is impossible for those who have no faith in God, and who see nothing beyond death, taking death as the final end. From such persons the Gita excludes itself specifically from addressing. Yet it is an axiom which the faithful can experience: hence, the Lord in the very opening words **unravels the mystery of Death.**

Coming back to the propriety of the background, what is this world of Nature but a battle-field where man lives? Any one can easily see, "the thorns which grow upon this rose of life: how lizard fed on ant, and snake on him, and kite on

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both: how the fish-hawk robbed the fish-Tiger of that which it had seized. The Shrike chasing the bulbul, which did hunt the jewelled butterfly till everywhere each slew a slayer, and in turn was slain, Life living upon Death. So the fair show veiled one vast, savage, grim conspiracy of mutual murder, from worm to man, who himself kills his fellow. The rage to live makes all living a strife. How fierce the war of weak and strong in the air: what plots! No refuge even 'in water." (From the Light of Asia) There is no growth of life except by self-feeding and deavouring of other life. Nature creates and preserves, and by the same action, slays and distroys. That is her scheme in her world. One, therefore, needs collosal faith to see the Supreme in a world full of contradictions, to be able to say, "*Lord, though Thy Nature slay me, yet will I trust in Thee*" In Nature, the universal creator-preserver becomes also the universal destroyer. Existence proceeds by struggle and slaughter. There is no harmony except by a balance of contending forces won out of potential discord. As defined by Darwin, **the struggle for life is the law of evolutionary existence.** Nature is not wholly love, beauty and good; it wears the grim mask of hate, discord and death also. What exists and lives has to battle with what seeks to exist and live. Utter harmlessness in conduct is impossible. However, other principles than strife also hold sway: associations of mutual help, self-sacrifice and love, all have play—but even these have to bear witness to the law of life by death. Nature-world is itself an eternal battle-field, and Kurushethra as the background is none out of place, out of tune. The great final action of the Mahabaratha was nothing less than a great world crisis then; and Arjuna the key figure to bring the action already commenced to its ordained conclusion viz., the destruction of adharma and the establishment of Dharma, himself faces a crisis of character, because of some emotional conflict which the action he was called upon to perform raised in him. Arjuna was ignorant as all of us are, that beyond the initial element of strife, known only in the physical-mental plane, there exists another plane—the Spiritual, which can harmonise these apparently conflicting worldly relations: Life in the

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mundane world can be reconciled only when action that is inevitable proceeds from a new poise of man, lighted by a liberating knowledge and leavened by true bakthi. Man wants to live in his own world, in his own heart, but Gita would have him live in his Spirit. This is the burthen of the Soul's Song known as Sri Gita.

It was not fear or cowardice that brought on the despondency in Arjuna. He was a tried hero of high caliber, not at all afraid of death. He did not also lose his sense of duty as a soldier: his reaction arose out of his mistaken affection for those whom he had to deal with. He wanted to spare them, to satisfy his self-conceived interest, and for his self-pleasing domestic happiness, basking in the sunshine of their friend-ship. Though they were in the wrong, he expiates on the consequences of taking away their lives, as though his forbearance would save them from death. All such arguments have no basis in his being. His talk of taking to sanyasa is a fit, not arising from his true nature which was thirsting for right action against injustice and adharma. Finding himself as the champion of a terrific slaughter of his kith and kin, his emotions over power him, and all his usual standards fail him, and he seeks an escape, by ways and means utterly opposed to his nature. His claim as a ruler, his love of victory as a hero fame, power and his sense of duty as a Prince to protect the laws of the realm and the dharma of his times—all step aside before his disgust to fight his relations and elders. Possession, enjoyment and rule become nothing against his sense of wrong for his kith and kin. The facts that he has the right on his side, and that his kith and kin are utterly in the wrong do not satisfy him. **There are Two Planes of Conduct** for man to act in this material world, one dependent on his external status, and the other independent of any status but dependent on the strength of the moral caliber of the actor himself, each valid in its own plane but not in the other. This brings about the conflict in all human actions. Ordinarily, it is the duty of a lawyer to defend his client, even though guilty: this is a line of conduct imposed upon him by his external relationship to the members of the society. But if then, he should

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feel the sinfulness of falsehood, he adopts quite an opposed line of conduct, now imposed by his own inner Self, and a clash ensues, the solution of which will, in any way, bristle with dissatisfaction. Thus, it was with Arjuna. This hero of the Pandava host, this champion of the cause of Dharma, with his sense of duty and responsibility to his society and its laws, comes into conflict with Arjuna the private individual, responsible to himself alone, and makes him reject his duty and his life mission, giving preference to his personal whim and fit of a moment. His abrupt voltiface is the outcome of an emotional aberration of the heart — not the instinctive abhorrence of himsa which a Buddha alone can feel. His sense of grief for an empty and desolate life, after the death of all his relations overpowered him, which if not got over, would have barred his evolution and that of the world too. Inaction just as Arjuna proposed, due to Tamasic ignorance is worse in its results than action born of Rajasic desire, bad though the same is. Failing to do what is clearly ones duty is more than evil, is sin and such a deriliction faced Arjuna. Taking refuge in ascetic inactivity, Arjuna would leave the emperfect world with its unsatisfactory methods and motives to lake care of itself. His shortsighted moralising mind is not aware of the greater misery, evil and sin resulting from his refusal to do his dnty. Hence, the Lord's demand for his action on behalf of the world and himself. The ideal of inaction is a dangerous thing to hold by precepts or example before the world. Though great, the method is not the best means for the many; though true is not the complete integral knowledge. Such renunciation, far from being indispensable, is not even possible, for Nature will never cease from its work. While emphasising to the very end that action should be preferred to inaction at all stages both before and after spiritual realisation, the Gita preserves a perfect balance, stressing now on knowledge, now on works and now on Devotion, without any absolute separate preferance of any one over the other two.

Correct action becomes difficult because the Soul and Nature are fatally subject to bondage and ignorance, there being no self-knowledge to know the true value of life and the meaning of existence. Man labours under the error of

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his self-view, conducting his life as a separate self-existent being who has freedom of his thought, will, feeling and action. He wants to bear the burden of his sins and errors, taking credit for his merits and virtues. The demands of his ego which rules him are to be satisfied. He identifies himself with the mechenical part of himself–the body, missing the greater inner spirit that he truly is. The Gita reconciles and unifies the inner spiritual truth with the outer activities of man's life. Our existence is complex, our essential principle obscure and our innermost power a secret — hence onr difficult problems. The material-vital law is the law of the survival of the fittest, of struggle, of desire and possession for the satisfaction of the body and the ego. Nothing can abolish the reality of the claim of our material-vital base, and the compulsions of Nature are a legitimate part of our destiny. Yet, matter and life are not all that man is: the Spirit in him which is much more than his body, life and mind, is the real man who when rightly developed, makes the body and mind his friends and instruments, through proper direction and control of all their actions. Neglect of the inner being ends in such instruments becoming the sure enemies of man in his attempt to establish his true Self, which can get revealed only in an absolutely calm and tranquil condition of the mind, having given up all normal functions like sensation, conception, emotion, imagination and thought, reached by man only in Samadhi. Yet, the mind strives towards some ideal, by thinking in terms of the Absolute of right-conduct, of love, of beauty, of justice, of service and of sacrifice, and attempts to follow a relative standard within its capacity, depending upon its own moral strength. This antagonism is a mystery brought on by Maya which when destroyed, resolves the tangle between body-life and mind's higher aspiration. The Gita solves this with *a re-statement of the truth of the Spirit everywhere* and at all times *to solve the problems of life and action*. It condemns outright the gospel of the Will to Live or the Will to Power which glorify mere physical strength and force, the worship of ego and its vehement acquisitive self-will, its tireless self–regarding intellect as Asuric. Man, while satisfying his desire and interest under right restrictions, must train and

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subdue his lower nature, and attune it to a higher law, both of personal and social life. All his actions must be for self-finding, self-fulfilment and self-realisation, not alone for their external and apparent fruits of the moment or the future in this world. (VI — 5, 6).

The double-standard which our social, ethical and moral codes admit, gives room for such conflict and misconeeption and hence the Gita enjoins man to rise above these relative codes of conduct and move and work in the plane of the Spirit within him, where there is but one absolute standard, having no place for the dualities of the other planes. Underneath the hard crust of strife in this world, there is harmony, peace, love and union to reach which man has to recognise the Supreme in such a warring world, in the faith that this enigma of conflict is due to his own ignorance, and seek an issue from this contradiction, else, it is impossible to live in peace in this world.

Nature's law is growth, and what impedes growth has to be broken up—such is the necessity for calamity. In great men, such break-up is incessant, until the worldly relations hang very loosely about them, while with the ordinary men, the vast majority in the world—having unsettled character and their worldly relations imprisoning them in their stony cage, calamities become unbearable. Yet, calamity has its compensation, and even the biggest among them, is but a temporary inconvenience. We miscreate our own evils, by interfering with the course of Nature, which has a two-fold aim. One is that while the lover seeks in marriage his private felicity, Nature hides in this happiness her own end, viz., progeny and preservation of the race. Her other and more important aim is the passage of the Soul into higher Forms. Since action is a compulsion of Nature, to act correctly, man needs must know, Who he is? What he is? and why his exit? The exposition of the nature and relationship of the Soul and Body has been based on **the Sankhya philosophy** with which the reader must become thoroughly familiar, especially with its terminology, as without a good grasp of the same, it would be difficult to follow the exposition of the Gita teachings.

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In its foundation, the **Gita is a Vedantic work,** being the essence of the Upanishads : yet, its ideas are modified by the Sankhya and Yoga ways of thought of the period. However, the Sankhya and Yoga of the Gita are radically different from the original going by the names. The traditional Sankhya is absolutely Dualistic in form, explaining existence, not by one but by Two Original Principles whose interrelation—not interactions which they never have, is the cause of the world. Purusha is the inactive principle and Prakriti the active one. Purusha is the "SOUL" or the pure Conscious Being, self-luminous, immobile and immutable. He does nothing but reflect the actions of Prakriti which is the active mutable principle. Her processes are all mechanical but being reflected in Purusha, assume the appearance of consciousness in their activities. Thus are created those phenomena of Life, preservation and destruction, birth, death, sense-knowledge, intellect, ignorance, happiness, misery etc., all dualities. So long as Purusha countenances such activities, they continue, and the moment Purusha withdraws his sanction, all activities of Prakriti cease.

The energy priciple of Prakriti is constituted primarily of the **Three Gunas or Modes-** *Sattvan, Rajas and Tamas*—which are three completely varied characteristic Energy forms. When the Gunas are balanced, being in a state of equilibrium, all is at rest : there is no action or creation, and there is nothing for the Purusha to reflect. But immediately there is a disturbance to the static conditions of the Gunas, by anyone or more of the three modes getting unbalanced—and this can happen and take place only if Purusha be willing-the Gunas strive and act upon each other, setting in motion all the processes of creation, conservation and dissolution. The Purusha countenances the same, since under a delusion, he attributes such activities to himself, though he is only a spectator, a gullible one at that, easily getting entangled in Prakriti's cheat. Purusha is delivered from this cosmic play only by his withdrawing his consent to same, when the Gunas have perforce to fall into a state of equilibrium. This reflection and this giving or withdrawal of consent seem to be the sole function of the Purusha who

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thus becomes a passive witness of Prakriti's activities. Passive Consciousness and active Energy are the dual causes of the phenomena of the Universe The Sankhya Purusha has neither an active will nor an active Intelligence. All actions are foreign to him, while Prakriti has both the attributes of conscious will and conscious intelligence, though dependent upon Purusha's reflection of same to burst forth into creation.

The Sankhya enunciates **24 Tatwas or Cosmic Principles** of Prakriti—the primal energy which is constituted by the three characteristic Gunas or Modes or Qualities, forming the constitutional base upon which the whole of creation is reared. As the prime movers of all phenomena, the whole cosmos is under the sway of the Gunas and even the Purusha is deluded by them. They are sometimes referred to as Maya also and form Tatwa No. I, and pervade all other Tatwas and the whole Cosmos. With Sattva, Rajas and Tamas the three coloured Qualities forming the constant basic ingredients, we have as the first immediate derivatives of Prakriti, the five elemental conditions or Pancha Bhuth-Akasha, Air, Fire & Light, Water and Earth—forming Tatwa Nos. 2 to 6. All Cosmos and all objects are created by the interaction and combination of these Five Tatwas on the base furnished by Tatwa No. I. the three Gunas. That, Energy is the primal source, and everything else its derivatives, is a conclusion as old as our civilization, but reached by Science only recently. Of the remaining 18 Tatwas, Nos. 7, 8 & 9, the trio forming one category are Buddhi, Ego or Ahankara and Mind. Buddhi is the discriminating principle, and is the seat of Will. The Ego is the rudimentary psuedo-self, a creation of Prakriti herself, and is the subjective principle of Manas. Mind or Manas is the power of conception, the original prime Sense which controls all the rest of the 15 Tatwas subordinate to it, viz., the Five Sensory Powers of Hearing, Touch, Form and Sight, Taste and smell (Tatwa Nos. 10 to 14), and the Ten Sense-Functions, composed of two groups of Tatwas Nos. 15 to 19 and Nos. 20 to 24. Ear, Skin, Eyes, Tongue and Nose are the five Organs of Knowledge—the windows of the Mind into the World, while the five Organs of Action are :—Larynx

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for Speech, Feet for Locomotion, Hands for Seizing, Excretary Organs for Ejection and Reproductive Organs (Genitals) for Generation.

In **the Sankhya System**, all is mechanical and inconscient (Jada) with Prakriti: yet Buddhi which is also her product, is endowed with and exercises discriminative Intelligence and Will, because of the reflection in Buddhi of Purusha's Light of Consciousness. As everything in Nature is subject to the deception of the all pervading Gunas, this light of the Purusha is falsely attributed to the Ego, set up by Prakriti herself, thus giving rise to the principle of Perversion and Inversion, called Maya or Avidya or Ignorance in the life of all Beings. The Ego, naturally tricks and cheats both Purusha and Buddhi—the two proximate entities in the Cosmic build up, and overcoming them exercises its full sway over all living beings. Buddhi, instead of looking to the Purusha as the source of Light, gets enslaved to the imposter Ego, and content to bask and shine in the usurper's reflected light, plunges man into a life of the senses—the natural element of Ego-life. The true origin and sanction for the whole play is completely obliterated, yielding place to the enthronement of the Ego-"I" and its reign, all because Buddhi—the divinely endowed discriminating faculty, under a delusion, fails to discern the Purusha from the Ego—a falsehood that is prolonged as long as Buddhi supports the Ego. This state is the Maya state of life—this allegiance of Intelligence to the Ego.

In **the Sankhya order of Creation,** the reflection of the Free Purusha in Prakriti generates the play of subjectivity and objectivity which is our experience of Existence. Of the two experiences, the subjective is involved first, because Consciousness is the first cause, and Nature is only a second or dependent cause, even though the instruments of such subjective experiences are those of Nature only. Of such tools, first in order and importance is Buddhi. This portal of Divine Light, apart from its vital role and function in the conduct and life of man, exercises even greater influence in the process of liberation of the Soul. Hence the path of the

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Yoga of Wisdom (Knowledge) had always been given, not only the pride of place for attaining man's goal, but was held out as the only way—a stand even now taken up by some Schools of thought, though not by the Gita. Next in importance is the Ego, because of its potentiality for mischief, its suppression is the sole condition for salvation. Then comes the Mind-Sense or Manas which is the battle ground of life. Subordinate to the mind, as its tools, are the specialised Organs—Five of Perception and Five of Action already named. Next come the Sensory Powers which give their value to objects for the mind, and make things and the world what they are to our subjective experience. As a substantial base for all, we have the Five Elements and the Primal Energy coloured by the three Gunas. The Sankhya postulates one Prakriti and many independent Purushas, as a single Purusha does not meet to satisfactorily account for the many conscious Beings in the world, each one of whom has his independent experience of the subjective and objective things of the world. All Beings do not see the world in an identical fashion, though for all there is presented the same world. There are infinite differences in views, attitudes, outlook, actions, experiences and consequent means of escape from such varying experiences—all because of the difference in levels of the evolving life. To name one Purusha, for the multiplicity of conscious Beings, lands into a further difficulty, regarding the liberation of the Purusha, which cannot take place all at once in all the countless conscious Beings, at varying stages of the liberating movement. With one Purusha, the Cosmos would cease immediately one conscious Being attained liberation, and as this is not the fact, many Purushas have been postulated.

The Gita has its own unique solution. **Gita-Sankhya is** catholic, being a peculiar synthesis. Gita denies what Sankhya affirms, and this denial is fundamental, relating to the multiplicity of independent Purushas and an Independent Prakriti. Gita emphatically postulates only ONE Purusha, as Purushottama having a triple status, while Prakriti is only His subordinate Energy part, not at all independent. The ONE is all in all, and is the lord and master of Prakriti.

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The uncompromising dualism of the Sankhya is denied, and Monism is affirmed as the basis for the Doctrine of Non-difference. Though in both Purusha is the cause of action of Prakriti, as also the cause of its withdrawal from action, in the Sankhya, it is Purusha and Prakriti *in their dualism* who cause the cosmic events, while in the Gita, Purusha by His Prakriti *in unity* becomes the cause of the world. The hint for such a solution is already found in the Upanishads, which speak of Prakriti as the unborn female principle of three Colours (Gunas), ever creating and active. There are also two Purushas of whom one cleaves to and enjoys Prakriti, while the other Purusha abandons her without enjoying. The same is described as two birds on one tree, eternally yoked companions, one of whom eats the fruits of the tree: this is the Purusha in Nature enjoying the Cosmos. The other bird eats not, but watches his fellow companion as a silent witness, withdrawn from enjoyment and all activities. Sorrow and sufferings overtake the first bird, entangled in Cosmos, but when he sees the silent witnessing bird, he is delivered from sorrow, having the que from the second. This idea of the bound and unbound (liberated) states of the Purusha is fully worked out in the Gita-the two states belong to one and the same Personality, called Purushottama, who is also more than these two states, having the third status of the SUPREME BEING. In the immobile, immutable status, He is known as Akshara or more popularly as BRAHMAN, for ever free, inactive and unattached. In the mutable active status, He descends into the multiplicity of creations, and is known as Kshara or Jiva or Soul. In the first status, Purushottama manifests Himself in cosmos, as NIRGUNA (without qualities), and in the second status, as SUGUNA or with qualities, becoming the mutable Purushas activating Prakriti. Thus in the Akshara, there is the immutable UNITY, while in the Kshara are the multiplicity or mutable becomings, residing in PARA-Prakriti, the Higher Nature, but descending into the Lower Prakriti and taking the role of Jiva or Soul. Sankhya, proceeding by Knowledge, or Yoga of Wisdnm (Intelligence) has as its goal, utter passivity, through renunciation of works. This path, known as

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Gnana Yoga, is not denied by the Gita as a means for liberation but it lays stress on *the synthesised path of Yoga of Works, enlightened by Knowledge and enlivened by the cult of Love or Bakthi.*

That man is Soul and not body, that death is a phenomenon pertaining only to the body, and is a harmless but necessary process, whereby the Soul discards an worn out tool to secure a new, are hard to believe aud even more hard to act upon. Soul and Body are totally disparate: change is only for the body and mind, but not for the Soul, which has neither growth nor decay. These are axiomatic Truths, but man is afraid of many things, and fear of death is the strongest, having become instinctive. Fear is a feeling caused by the sense of otherness, of separation and of individuality. To overcome this, one has to develop the sense of unity with the universe, through a faith in our common divine origin. In the objectification of ourselves as something different from God and His creation, and the consequent feeling of separation from them, lies the cause of all fear-complex, and this must be rooted out. The conviction that we are not this changing perishable body, but the eternal Soul, beyond the reach of all harm, mnst hold us firm. If we are only the body and not the Soul, then death has no significance, for by death, we only mean, that the body comes to exist by itself, separated from the Soul. Only that body which the Soul animates is said to have life, while non-animation of the body by the Soul is its death. All misery comes from the fear of death, and from unsatisfied desires. If *fear of death and feeling of want* being absent, there will be no more misery in life.

Man looks upon death as a calamity, because he cannot repair the consequences: but Nature has instituted death as her process to help the progress of the liberty-seeking Soul. All diseases are the effects of Nature's process in curing bodily ailments and defects, and death is one such process when the body becomes incurable, and then Nature provides a new and more suitable vehicle for the Soul. Death of the body does not interrupt the continuity of the Soul's progress towards liberation, but aids same after the Soul's

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own way. Not to know the tool, as different from its owner, is fundamental ignorance which is the source of all error, wrongs and misery in the world. Death is a process that overtakes only the tool, and to attribute what is suffered by the tool to its owner is the deepest delusion, arising from our want of faith in the existence of God and Soul. Even Arjuna to whom fear of death was foreign, thought that death put an end to all existence. He was afraid that the noble Souls of Bhishma and Dhrona would perish along with their bodies on the battle-field. He could not persuade himself to believe, that to such high-souled beings, who by force of circumstances, found themselves ranged on the side of adharma, death would be most welcome, as releasing them from such incompatible fellowship with evil. Like the common man, his faith in the divinity of the Soul was only lip deep: hence, his inability to rise beyond the clamour of the emotions and the cheat of the senses in the physical-mental plane, and act in the divine plane, without accepting the material and sensational touches of the world at the value which the common man attaches to them. The necessity thus arose for the Lord to teach how to live in the Soul and not in the body, to know oneself and all others as Souls, and dealing with others as Souls, and not as physical bodies.

In Nature every process is cyclic, and change which is death of the old and birth of the new, is the law of Life, in its progression towards fulfilling the cycle. Man is aware, that from childhood he changes and grows into a youth, from youth into manhood, from manhood, into old age and from old age through the process of integration, called death, back into childhood, to complete the cycle. To argue that the gap between death and birth is alone left unbridged, and that Nature is untrue to her own law in this particular part of the chain, on the score that the link is unmanifest to man, cannot weigh with the faithful, who see no cause whatever for Nature to breakdown. Everything in creation is in a state of flux: motion and change are the concomitants of Life, which is one aspect of manifestation of the Infinite as finte. Form is a necessity for revealment of the Infinite, yet the Infinite cannot be fully expressed in finite forms. Hence,

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finite forms, which express partially the Truth, must always change and must necessarily die to prove that they mean more than what they contain or express. In change and death of the finite forms lie revealed the spirit of the Infinite. Were creation to remain unchanging, it would become the prison house of Truth — the truth that is the Infinite. The old form changeth yielding place to new, and only thereby the Infinite fulfills its purpose of revealing Itself in creation. Our physical form, like the fruit of the tree that ripens in the sun and falls of itself, must be willingly given up. We are unwilling to die, because we are unwilling to give up the fruits of our labours: but such fruits should not cling to us but freely fall out, otherwise, like silt carried by the river choking its flow, they impede and stop our Soul's current. The end of life is as natural as its beginning —birth. We must not lament over the one, while rejoicing over the other, for they are the two faces of the same coin. Who dies if the world lives?

Soul, Body (World) and Death *and their relationship* have always puzzled man, and will ever remain so, without the aid of Faith. They defy solution, because they remain outside the pale of human intelligence. Soul, being the first cause of all, cannot get caught by human reasoning, since the part cannot comprehend the whole. The symbol of the serpent, with its tail in its mouth, as if swallowing itself, illustrates the limitations of the human mind in its efforts to grasp the All, since man's intellect soon strikes against the unknown in everything, whenever he dives deep into any fundamental truth. Yet too often, man forgets that the Unknown is no less real beacuse it is unknown. There is hardly any Tribe, however uncivilized and barbarous which has not a word in its native language for the Soul Idea as something different from the body, though closely allied to it. The Soul is likened to the fragrance, and the body to the flower, or the fledgeling and the egg-shell, respectively. Plato compared the Soul to the harmonious music that can be drawn from the lyre — the body. Metaphors, however poetical and beautiful, cannot satisfy the intellect, as to the nature of the ineffable Soul. Yet, if we allow our minds to dwell upon the world-moving thoughts of noble Souls, their

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firm faith in God will surely carry us along with them. "From the beginning of History, the one cry of the personal man has been to know the Supreme Personality. He has tried to give It names and forms, weaving It in legends, round his life and the life of his race, offering It worship in countless forms and ceremonies. His heart has broken out in songs, in pictures, images, temples and festivities, at which reason may sometimes laugh or scoff. In joy and sorrow, in death and sufferings of despair, in love desecrated, when existence became tasteless and unmeaning, man stretches his hands high up to feel the touch of this Supreme Person, across his darkened world. To the Hindu, his God is not distant. He feels His nearness in all human relationship of affection and love. In all his social activities and festivals — and they are numerous — God is the Chief-Guest." (Tagore) **Socrates**, *thes age of ancient Greece.* the best in whom was the modesty of his wisdom, believed in God, and also hoped that death would not quite destroy the Soul of man. "*Know Thyself*", was his appeal to mankind, as the study of the inner man was an infinitely worthier subject than the one-sided physical science, leading exclusively to the knowledge of external Nature and things. The intelligent sinner, he said, would surely control himself better, and slip less often into imitation of the beast, and hence, he advocated wisdom as the goal of life, thereby to confine man's self-seeking within the circle of the total good, wherein the advantage of every one would lie in social and loyal conduct.

"To fear death is only to think ourselves wise, without being wise; for, it is to think that we know what we do not know. For anything that man can tell, death may be the greatest good that can happen to him, but he feels it, as if he knew quite well, that it was the greatest of evils. And what is this, but that shameful ignorance of thinking, that we know what we do not know. The state of death is one of two things: either, the dead man wholly ceases to be, or loses all sensations, in which case, it will be like the sleep of one, whose slumbers are unbroken by any dreams, and thus it will be a wonderful gain, for, then, eternity

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will be nothing more than a single night. Or, death may be a change and a migration of the Soul into another place in another form, whereto all who had died before are gone. What good could be greater than to mix up and converse with those great minds of old? People think, it is a terrible fate to die, as though they expected that to live for ever would be tolerable, even if possible. *Dread of death is a mere illusion of thought.* We conceive we are going to meet death, but in fact no such meeting can occur. When we *are*, death is absent from us: when we die, we are *no more*. Soul and death are like light and darkness. A Philosoper is of good cheer when he dies, since death is deprivation of the body by the Soul. Caring very little for the pleasures of eating, drinking, sex and bodily adornments, he stands aloof from the body, turning towards the Soul, since, in the search for wisdom, the companionship of the body is a hindrance. The senses are inaccurate and unreliable, and man reasons best when none of the senses harasses him. The body is for ever taking up his time with the care of its needs. Diseases attack it, and man loses so much of his time in tending it. Again, it fills him with passion, desires and fears, much of which is foolish. Man is forced to pursue wealth, living in slavery to the cares of the body. Most men regard death as an evil, because they are all lovers of their bodies.

To prove that **the living are only born from the dead**, and that there is no break in the cycle, Socrates resorts to the doctrine, that in the case of every concrete thing, which has an opposite, that thing is generated only from its opposite. Also, in every pair of such opposites, there are two generations between the two members of the pair–from one to the other, and then back again from the other to the first. Take such pairs as, greater and smaller, weaker and stronger, sleeping and waking etc., the opposites are generated from their opposites. If sleeping existed without the corresponding opposite, waking, then all nature would at last be in the same state of sleep, making the tale of Endymion meaningless and inconspicuous. Similarly, if all things in which there is life, were to die, and when they

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were dead, were to remain in that state and not come to life again, then everything at last would be dead and nothing alive. Also, if living things were generated from other sources than death, the result is inevitable, that all things would be consumed by death, leaving nothing alive. Further, if death had been a release from all things, it would become a windfall to the wicked who thus escape the consequences of their wickedness. The Doctrine of Reminiscence is also taken as proof of the existence of the Soul and the harmlessness of death. Learning is regarded as a process of recollection: if so, one must have learnt at some former time what he recollects now. All knowledge is a remembrance of what we had experienced at some previous time. Ideas of absolute Beauty, Justice, Goodness and Equality really exist, and we refer all sensible perception to these eternal Ideas as standards and form judgements. Only if our Souls had existed, these ideas can become our knowledge at birth. Crito upon whom all the arguments of Socrates had been in vain, asked Socrates, "How shall we bury you?". "As you please. Only you should catch me first, and not let me escape you," so replied the Sage, and turning to his other friends, smilingly added, "Be you all my sureties to Crito that I shall go away when I have drunk the poison, and not remain with you. Only then he will feel my separation less." Man is very much grieved when the dody is burnt or buried, thinking that the body being the man, suffers dreadful things through such treatment. This is a case of using words wrongly which is not only a fault in itself but creates evil in the Soul.

Destruction *is the goal of everything earthly.* All our fears, struggles, hopes and joys—what will they lead to, if we, with all these, end in absolute death? The plant takes nourishment from the earth, grows, then decays and dissolves, giving itself back to earth. Law is uniform and Nature works on the same plan in respect of all creation, including man. If our present state be the best for us, why is there so much misery, suffering and agony, brought on by nature? What is more, why is there an end to this best of all states, in death? This state is unsatisfying; yet, we

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cannot take our own lives with violence, nor the life of others, for everyone has to pass through the Slough of Despond, and the sooner he is through it, the better for all, but not, so as to avoid it. Clinging to life indicates the possibility of future life and past existence and therefore past experience, transmitted into present life as knowledge potential. How does the chick begin to pick up food as soon as hatched? How does the duck fly towards water from coming out of the egg? Chicken fear the hawk and ducklings love water. Similarly, the recurring experiences of various fears in the course of several re-incarnations produce the instinctive clinging to life in all living beings. It is the samskara carried from birth to birth: so is fear of death, even though decadance seizes everything in this world. It is only by giving up the world that the Beyond comes, never through clinging to life. The thirst after body is the greatest bane of human existence. We are both bound and free—bound by our body and free as Soul.

"**Nothing is one's own**", *is the lesson Death has taught since creation.* Behold the swiftness of the oblivion of all things, of the emptiness of praises, the fickleness and want of judgment of those who seem to bestow applause. All things are transient, soon becoming a tale. In this ordered universe, the body, and even the memory of same, quickly disappear. Act, speak and think, as one prepared this moment to depart from life. Nothing that is in conformity with Nature is evil. The Supreme will not thrust death upon us if it were evil. It cannot be said that Nature had everlooked a real evil through ignorance or powerlessness, though aware of its existence. We cannot assume want of skill or power in Nature, as to allow joy and suffering, fortune and misfortune, befall indiscrimanately, the good and the bad. Death and birth, blame and fame, pain and pleasure, wealth and poverty which equally overtake good men and bad, must in themselves be neither foul nor fair, being happenings external to our mind, which if strong, would be able to keep them out, as things external and indifferent. Death is such as birth is: a composition, out of certain elements at birth, decomposes at death into the same

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elements. Man is more than his birth and death. If he were only a compound of elements, a product of confused weaving, only to be disbursed, there is then no use craving to tarry in such a purposeless compound: nor, one should care for anything, except to be turned into dust. Whoever remains in this self-deception and ignorance is greatly harmed. You seek long life—what for? If you analyse the purposes which seem to you worth craving for a further lease of life, they become insignificant and attended with pain. What if Nature allows you only a short span of existence? The limit is set to the finished thing (yourself) by One who was responsible cause for its composition, then, and now is responsible for its dissolution. Thou art responsible for neither: depart then, serenely. (*Marcus Aurelius*).

Development of Hindu Thought. In India, religion was recognised as something private and personal, and hence the religion of the grown up cannot be and ought not to be the same as that of an youth. Again, with the growth of the mind, as age and experience advanced, the religious ideas of an old man must differ from that of an active man of the world, who has to struggle with hard facts pressing him on all sides. The Four stages of life, as recognised by the Hindus, and the Four Varnas, are both natural and universal to the spiritual growth of man, though they get invalidated in the modern context of a work-a-day world, where the Spirit has but a slippery hold. All other religions have overlooked these fundamental facts, and have forced on the wise and the old, the food that was meant for babes: and hence, have alienated and lost their best thinkers. **Bramacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasa** *are four evolutionary stages in every man's life.* The outlook on life in the first two stages is quite different from the outlook on life in the last two stages, and hence their philosophy and religion are also quite distinct. These are reflected in the Vedas and in the Upanishads. There is no systematic teaching in the Hindu Texts. Dialogue is the common form of these discourses, as in the Gita, where men who had few cares and fewer ambitions, began to think and talk informally, in the forest shades, about the Soul and God and,

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the relation between the two. The starting point for the Upanishads are the Vedas—the highest authority on all matters of religion. **The Vedas** *are the echoes of God's Voice in the Soul of man,* being the expressions of the intuitional spiritual experiences of the Religious Experts, called Rishis. The Truths revealed therein are capable of re-experience by any one, on compliance with certain conditions, and following certain practices, known as Yoga. The Vedas have formed the valid formulae or rules of life for the busy, who, engrossed in the rough and tough of life in the world, were unfit to frame rules of conduct for themselves.

The contents of the Vedas can be divided into two distinct categories :— (i) The Philosophy of Works or Karma Kanda : (ii) The Philosophy of Renunciation or Gnana Kanda. There are Four Vedas. **Rig Veda** has 1028 metrical hymns in praise of various Devas or aspects of the Divine Powers. This is the Reciter Priest in sacrificial ceremonies. **Yajur Veda,** the performing Priest, is mostly in prose, with ritualistic formulae and explanations. The **Sama Veda** is the Udgatir Priest who sings the Sama Melodies. **Atharva Veda** is the Supervisor or Master of Ceremonies. Each Veda is constituted of four parts. The first part, of Mantra or Samhita, contains chants and invocation stanzas and ritualistic formulae used for complicated ceremonies, sacrifices or yagnas, to secure temporal power and prosperity, in addition to the hope of future good. This is the Karma Kanda, dealing with religious rites, forming the Non-upanishadic part of the Vedas. The second part, called the Brahmanas, which interpret the texts furnished by the first Mantra part, are commentaries, describing in minute details all the ceremonies, explaining the hidden meaning, by citing history, or stories. Both the parts relate to the Grahastha stage of life. The third and fourth parts, the Aranyakas and the Upanishads form the Gnana Kanda portion of the Vedas, explaining the processes of intuition of Brahman, through knowledge and ascetic practices. The Aranyakas are also ritualistic in content, like the Brahmanas, but only the symbolic and spiritual aspects of the sacrifices and ceremonies are found, to be meditated upon, but not actually performed.

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They are only recited by the forest-dwellers, Vanaprasthas. They are allegoric in nature, their function being to supply esoteric meaning to the great Vedic rituals. The Aranyakas, embracing the meditative part, became the spiritual force of worship.

The Upanishads, the last and fourth part of each Veda, being the essence of all true wisdom, speak of knowledge and liberation. They are in the form of Sutras which are no more than headings containing the quintessence of the Hindu Philosophy. Orally taught as these Sutras ought to have been, there must have always coexisted a body of oral teachings without which they are completely unintelligible. Sankara and others have gathered up these traditional teachings in what are called Bashyas on the Sutras. In fact, these Bashyas form the real body of the doctrines to which the Sutras are no more than an useful Index. The Sutras have acquired an independent authority, so much so, various Philosophies have been founded on various interpretations of the Sutras by the various founders of the different Schools of Thought, like, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa, Vallabha etc., All of them entirely depended upon the Upanishadic Sutras — a part of the Vedas—and all the Schools are occupied in proving that their doctrines are in complete harmony with the revealed Sutras. From the beginning, the Upanishads were believed to be inspired, and hence all teachings must conform to their texts, and all doctrines, to be valid, must be harmonised with the texts of the Upanishads. Though among themselves there are apparent conflicts and contradictions, the various doctrines of the various Schools of Philosophy try with extraordinary ingenuity to reconcile same with the Upanishadic Sutras. Each doctrine has been woven with wonderful coherence into a system of Philosophy, the divergent interpretations of the Sutras leading to their differences. The teachings reveal that they are not from the teacher's own mind, but as he himself had been taught by another, and so on, for some millenniums, these precious possessions have been handed down from mouth to mouth. Considering the circumstances of how the ancient Scriptures have come to us, we have only to take the spirit, rejecting what is inconsistent in the letter to **TRUTH and AHIMSA,**

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the two cardinal rocks of Hindu Faith. The ancient Teacher always showed great hesitation, and rather grudgingly imparted such knowledge to others. Being aware of the high standard and value of the Knowledge, the fitness of the taught became a vital consideration with them. The Office of the Spiritual Teacher as that of the Disciple receiving it, required moral preparation. Knowledge cannot become the privilege of a particular class or section, but, no one, not specially prepared and fit to receive it, can become entitled to acquire it, competent as he should be to assimilate the high and subtle Truth. Proper initiation by a Guru was a necessity in those days when these Texts, not being on record, were all orally communicated. The moral qualifications of the disciple were indeed exacting: he must have subdued his passions, possessing calmness and purity of mind. Faith is absolutely essential, as that alone can lead one to see many things beyond the limit of human reasoning, yet comprehensible to the heart and Soul. To be able to mistrust the evidence of the senses is the first step, and is a power that will take one far along the road of Spiritual advancement.

In the early periods, all the Deities are distinctly physical in character — the names of the great phenomena of Nature like, Sun and Moon, Fire, Heaven and Earth, Rain, Storm, etc. These became the center of **Mythology and Tradition**. In the Vedic Hymns, there is the first revelation of the Deity, the first discovery that behind this visible and perishable world, there must be something which is divine, imperishable and eternal, to unify the bewildering variety. Next we see the growth of this divine idea very clear, as the early worshippers became dissatisfied with the deities and deified heroes. Then there arose the postulation of one God alone above all the deities, to satisfy the yearning after one God, though the separate individual deities were not limited by this God, but each deity became supreme for the particular Sect or Clan. Thus, beginning with a most natural faith, in invisible powers, lurking behind the drama of Nature, to the ending with a belief in one God with supreme powers was a great spiritual stride. The sages of the Upanishads inherited this final outcome of the later Vedic Age, and

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from this they fashioned out, by discovering at last, the true relation between that ONE Divinity as seen objectively in Nature, and the Divinity as perceived subjectively in man himself. This relationship which they built up is the most sublime Philosophy — The Vedanta — the one most satisfying religion, the safest and unfailing spiritual plank to cross this worldly Existence. Here, there is no attempt to prove the immortaliiy of the Soul by argument, but simply asserted as a matter of conviction, since it is impossible of objective verification, being a subjective experience. The Upanishads and the Gita leave the old beliefs as useful to those who know no higher bliss than an increase of the happiness which they can enjoy in this life, at the same time holding out, that he who gains true knowledge of Brahman as Eternal, and of the Soul of man as identical with Brahman, is immortal. To such, the state of man after death led to no doubts. Man is immortal as soon as he knows Himself (as Brahman).

The relation between Brahman and His creation—the World, is the same as the relation between *the Subject and its Object.* Sankara's fundamental proposition is that an Object can never be conceived as a Subject and vice versa, since they are not only different from each other, but incompatible and opposed and mutually exclusive. Sankara means by Subject, what is TRUE and REAL. In fact, the divine Self, including the human Soul, is the only Subject, while, what are phenomenal and unreal, the body with its organs and the whole visible Cosmos, are the Object. The Object may be seen, heard, touched and sensed, but not the Subject which cannot be seen, heard or touched: Its Being is its knowing, not its being known. The statements, "I am strong, I am blind," are not true, because, here the Subject "I" has got upon it projected, some objective qualities, which the body alone can possess, as strength, blindness etc,. Again, when we say, "I am black, This house is mine", we fail to distinguish the Subject from the Object, which we mix up, by transfering the essence and quality of the one upon the other. The nature of such transference is a habit common to humanity, and a necessity of thought, to combine what

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is true with what is false, which lies at the root of all mundane experience. We take a thing for what it is not, and this is illusion or Maya or Avidya. That a man is thin, fat or sick or, that he longs for power, wealth and children, are all states of the body and mind only, in respect of which, the Subject Self or Soul, is only a witness of all the doings and wishings: yet, all such bodily and mental states and actions are conceived to be that of the Self. Hence, all such worldly knowledge belong to the realm of delusion, which it is the aim of Vedanta to replace by true knowledge or Vidya. The Western mind always speaks of the Self as something that can be known and described, and therefore, may form a possible Object. Western Psychology treats the Soul as an object of knowledge, dissecting It into consciousness, memory, conception etc, which to the Vedantin are mental processes outside the Soul. The Subjective Soul is the knower, hence can never be known as an object. When others say that they know us, they can only mean that they know our phenomenal Ego. Thus, by transfering a subjective-selfhood to Objects like Sun, Sky, Fire, we produce mythology, or knowledge which is only a half-truth.

The Self can never become Objective, and immediately we conceive of It as an Object, illusion steps in and Cosmic Life begins, subject to birth and death and dualities, while the real Self unaffected, stands aloof. The human intellect is powerless to predicate anything to the Self beyond Its Being, Its Knowing and Its feeling Bliss. Vedanta distinguishes between Reality, Unreality or Maya and what is Non-existent or False. There is a deep rooted fallacy which takes Unreality for the third category of Non-existence. A perverted or inverted notion of Reality is Un-Reality. This world and all the cosmic phenomena are perverted and inverted notions of Reality: hence Un-reality has Reality as its true support. In the dark, we mistake a rope for a snake or vice versa. This is an instance of Un-reality, but when a drunkard sees double, it is falsehood, having no base. Brahman is the great cause, and the Cosmos with all its phenomena is the great effect, whose substantiality is never denied, because the effect rests on Brahman. The next boldest leap in

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Vedanta is that there can be only one Brahman, the cause of everything — the material and effective cause of all. Nothing could exist besides Brahman, for if anything existed (including our Soul), it would follow that Brahman was limited which is impossible, inconceivable. Brahman and the World are, as cause and effect, and there cannot be any substantial difference between cause and effect. Hence, the phenomental world is as real as Brahman, nay, is in its ultimate reality, Brahman itself. The West is familiar with the notion that the Soul is God-like but not God. Vedanta postulates a Brahman without a second, and it follows that there cannot be a Soul separate from Brahman. **Tat Twam Asi.** *Thou art That.*

God — Soul Relationship: There is a difference between God and our individual Soul but such difference is only in convention. Take the relation of the river and the sea or ocean. The river shall become the sea when it flows into it which is inevitable. The river waters the fields, runs through villages and towns, after leaving the mountains and forests where it had its source, though the waters descended from the heavens. With all these it has only a partial relationship, for it cannot become them, losing its own identity as river, whereas, with the sea, it becomes one — the lesser moving water of the river is in affinity with the great motionless sea. So too, our soul has temporary and partial relations with things of the world which it soon leaves, moving on to merge with the Infinite, who is the ocean of infinite rest, and who gives significance to our endless activities through the Soul. The Soul is as perfect as God — there cannot be any diminition in this. The inividual Soul and the God-Soul are always united, being One. Like the river that has attained the ocean at one end, and yet at the other end — the source — is still pursuing the ocean of its fulfilment, through incessant movements and change, our embodied Soul in ignorance, pursues the Infinite in time and space, in joy and sorrow, in this finite world. When we, in full faith, realise the truth of our being the Soul, as well as of its identity with the Supreme, our heart is filled with bliss. Then all our activities become services of Love and all our trials, become opportu-

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nities. Harmony prevails, with complete eradication of all contradiction, arising from duality. *(Tagore)*

What is the divide between Brahman and the Soul ? There is a limit to all human understanding and intelllect, and we cannot know what this wall, called **Maya, Avidya or Ignorance** is. To know Avidya is impossible, nay, it is contradictory, for he who would want to know avidya is like one who should wish to see darkness with the aid of a lamp (light). Avidya is destroyed by Knowledge : but it is the impetus to our phenomenal existsnce in the world, and it is that which differentiates the Soul and the world from Brahman. The Soul screened by Avidya becomes the temporal Self, and there is a distinct denial of difference between the Soul and Brahman, since the temporal Self, if divested of its temporal character is Brahman. The Scriptures declare us to be Brahman, but only when we believe it, and also, act up to the declaration, that we are said to be enlightened. Human intellect and senses can never realise the inconceivable Brahman who has no attributes. The worship of the Phenomenal God who is Brahman hidden behind the veil of Avidya is not wrong, is no waste, as by such worship, men still worship only the real Brahman, since there is none other than He in the phenomenal world also. In time, when true knowledge dawns on us, Reality rises before us of which we now know the shadows only. The human eye cannot even see the Sun except when covered by passing clouds. Avidya is not only individual ignorance but a general Cosmic force as darkness inevitable in absence of Light. Vedanta does not deny the existence of the world, but, only contends that the world has no existence without its supporting essence-Brahman. It avers that external appearances and sensations are deceptive and illusory which are even now verified by our experiences. There is no question of the Soul returning to Brahman, only the veil of Avidya is rent asunder, i.e. knowledge is gained which constitutes the process of liberation.

The intuition of the Brahman is only the correction of an error in perception. Subject and Object, both are unborn and eternal. The Subject is conscious, while the object is

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unconscious, existing for the enjoyment of the Subject. The relationship of the enjoyer and the enjoyed is brought on by Maya, and in this lies the seed of suffering, misery and apparent joy. The misery is avoidable if the Maya relation is rent asunder i.e. if enjoyment of objects is eschewed. What inflicts pain is the mind; what suffers is also the ego-mind. It is our mind, the imaginative faculty in us that is at the root of the world phenomena, subjective as well as objective. The cause-seeking tendency of the Intellect cannot realise the Non-Duality of Reality which appears as different from Itself in the world of phenomena. How is this is in-explicable, and this inexplicability is denoted by various symbols — Maya, Avidya, Modes of Prakriti etc., Hence Maya is not an argument for proving the unreality of the world-phenomenon, but only a term used to emphasise the capacity of inexplicable relationship to cloud the real character of Reality and make Reality appear as something different from Itself. The world outside us is a living reality: It is only each one's private world, of love and hate, of pride and prejudice, of likes and dislikes, of comforts and sorrows which is not a reality, To each, the world is (his) mind precipitated. The finite world is not independent of its ultimate source — the Infinite Reality. How then, this distinction in outlook came about is not explicable: it is a false outlook, and is called Maya or the Cosmic Principle of Finiteness common to all minds human. Our mind is incapable of comprehending duality as a whole, hence it cuts up the Universe with the adjuncts of Space and Time and causation, leading to the duality of cause and effect. Hence, if the mind ceases to imagine phenomona, all duality must vanish, as this does really happen in Samadhi, where the mind loses its character as mind, merging with the Soul, and there is then no object to cognise.

The Idea or Word and the Form. All religions venture to ascribe to the Supreme Being the human predicative of Knowledge or Conscious Light, but the Sankya objects even to this on the score that such knowledge makes Him dependent on Objects with reference to the act of His Knowing. Not necessarily so, since the Sun can shine

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whether there are Objects are not to shine upon: likewise, the Supreme must always, even before creation, have had something to know and think upon. The objects of His Eternal Thoughts could have been **NAMA (WORDS) and RUPA (FORMS)**. The Platonic theory of Form and Ideas, and the Stoic theory of Lagos — Language and Thought — concur with the Vedantic view. Thought and Language are inseparable, and this has been perceived from the earliest times. Nama-Rupa as thoughts in the Universal Mind exist in the unmanifest state before creation, while after creation, they become manifest and manifold as the phenomenal world or Cosmos. This dogma of the inseparability of thought and language is accepted by modern Philosophy. The theory of the Supreme Brahman meditating on Words, and shaping the world by means of Words is a natural one, admitted by many religions. "In the Beginning, there was the Word or Words and that by it or them, all things were made." The word is the manifestation of Thought, and every word expresses a concept, not a percept. By the word, "Tree" is not meant this tree or that tree, but a general concept of all trees. Every individual thing is the realisation of an Ideal. Similarly, every man is the realisation of the Divine Thought or Word — MAN-HOOD. In the Vedas, this Idea is brought home very forcibly by the Personification of VAK or Speech, as a power, even beyond the Devas and Deities. Vak is made to support all the other Gods. Vak says of herself, "I am the Queen. I am Intelligence. The Gods have made me manifold." Vak or Word has been conceived from the beginning as a creative Power by the Vedas. She is the Principal Agent in the world of Creation, the Better-Half of Prajapathi, the Creator. (Vak or Saraswathi, the Goddess of Learning is the spouse of Brahma). "*All was made by Vak: all that was made was Vak*". **"All things were made by the Word."**— *St. John*. Originally, Brahman Himself was conceived as the embodiment of Sound (Sabdha), and hence the Vedas are known as Sabdha-Brahman. Prajapathi was Vakpathi, and creation was conceived, not as a making, but as a coming forth or bursting forth of Thought, since word or utterance is a bursting forth. That communication between the Creator and the created could be established

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by means of Words is an ancient idea of the Hindus. Brahman can get into the manifest world only by means of His Thought, and the communication was achieved by Nama-Rupa, Words and Forms. Brahman got into the Cosmos by two, by Forms and by Words. The Universe extended as far as Name and Form extended. Name and Form are the two great powers of Brahman, and they reveal Brahman in His World. Thus, the transcendent Brahman is brought into relation with His own Creation by means of His two great powers — by means of those Forms which are words and by means of those Words which are forms. Language and Thought (Reason) conceived as a creative power that sustains and pervades the world occur in the Upanishads (Maitrayana). Two Brahmans have to be meditated on — the Word and the Non-Word. By the word alone the non-word is revealed. The Nirguna is revealed by the Suguna Brahman. In its unrevealed state, Brahman is unknown, and in Its revealed state it is the Divine Creator and His Creation. Hence the supreme potency of meditation, thought, Mantra, the Mono-Syllable OM, RamaNama, devotional songs, Bhajans and Prayers. The visible world is part of a wider and more spiritual universe from which it draws its deep significance. Prayer is the way and method by which contact is established between the visible world and its continuum viz, the Spiritual Universe. (Based on *Max Muller*).

Religion is found to be *an universal phenomenon*. Everywhere we find faith and rituals, which inspite of variations, seem to cohere in most essential features. Religion is native to the human mind. Belief in God persists, whatever else in human nature may change. Religion is the core of a lasting civilisation. Just as the body is kept trim by food, and the mind by knowledge, so the Spirit grows by religion which is the truth that is lived, not merely logically comprehended. The concept of truth grows with the changing level of consciousness. Religion is experience : what is it that is experienced ? Here, differences arise, because personal experience is subjective, and the vision of Reality is influenced and coloured by the ideas and pre-possessions of the perceiving mind. Within this framework, each visionary has his intimate pre-

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judices, according to his personal, racial and historical endowments. If descriptions of Reality differ, the difference also arises because, our notion of Reality cannot be full and complete, and therefore not wholly True. We do not deny the objectivity of the world even though our sense perceptions are subject to our personal factors, which result in varied experiences of things, but we deny the Reality in spiritual perceptions on the score of the variations brought on by personal equations. The soul of the Buddha was cut into by the sorrows and sufferings of the world: and universal love and compassion became the law of Buddhist life. To the Hebrew, the perversion of moral values was so serious that he sought relief in an Omnipotent God, just and stern. The Jew as well as the Moslem, feeling the force of imperative conscience, made the Supreme Ruler, a King of Kings. The Christian, unlike the Semetic races who were concerned with the inviolable dignity of the ethical imperative, made much of the saving Grace and Benevolence of the Supreme to save himself from sin. The X'ian takes his stand on the immediate certitude of Jesus on whose ability and willingness to save the Soul of man, it is impossible not to trust, but the idea of the Cross is that he who loves humanity will have to suffer for others, even to the point of death. The Catholic considered the merciful Mother as the source of solace, even as the Sakthi cult among the Hindus did. In all such cases, the Divine Spirit answers some mood of the human mind, some need of the human Soul. The concept of the Divine is related to man's needs, based upon his spiritual level. God is more generally a personal category, where existence is conceived of, on an ethical basis: while for the logic of the rationalist and the mystic, God becomes Absolute and Impersonal. In both the forms, He is the Reality — only as a personal God, the emphasis is on His relation to the human being, while in the other case, God is viewed in relation to Himself. To admit the various descriptions of God, as Hinduism does, is not to lapse into polytheism. When the finite presses man, he seeks refuge in the Infinite, and the finite presses him at so many different points, and hence his very different accounts of the Infinite — the outcome of this protean pressure of worldly

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life on man. All representations of God are relative and symbolic and can never be full or final: they are like the attempts to empty the waters of the deep with small sea shells. Idol worship is part of human nature, human need. Man hankers after symbols. Why should one be more composed in a Church or Mosque, than at home, or in the streets? We adore the flag that symbolises the Nation: Statues and pictures are aids to fix our thoughts on one idea.

One of **the great glories of Hindu System and thought** is that it has brought into its fold many sects professing many different beliefs. It did not adopt one particular creed as the standard for the whole human race, standing at various levels of soul development. Some expressed God as a Power, some as Personality and some as Spirit. The feeble-minded found God in trees, in animals and in Nature: but the strong in spirit found God everywhere, while the Seers with their universal outlook found Him in the Self of all, including their own. Even the cultivated Hindu tolerated and protected superstitious customs and rites, in order not to confuse and disturb the low mental level of the masses at large, as enjoined by Gita Chap. III — 26. Religion was organised in a monistic way, only it was not rigid, since one's knowledge of God was limited to one's capacity, and allowance was made for this in the religion. From the crude beliefs of the half-civilized Hill Tribes to the highest Vedantin, there are countless forms in between. *The Hindu is highly democratic,* having full freedom of Conscience in his efforts to realise his Self. The Cosmic Deities may be regarded as delegates having some one aspect of the powers of Brahman. Man is a universe in epitome, and the Deities that preside over the cosmic functions have their corresponding rulership over man. Hence, man's propitiation of such Deities is good for his mundane well-being. To the ignorant, Brahman as such does not exist, attributing all powers to Nature which he begins to fear, and then worship, as having control over the destiny of himself and his possessions. The intelligent feel otherwise — they admit a Power above Nature, on whom both they and Nature depend. The cosmic Deities like the Sun, Varuna, Agni etc., are only

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powers of Nature deriving their strength from Brahman. The following story is from the Upanishads:— Once the Cosmic Deities became so vain as to forget their source of power. Then, Brahman appeared disguised before them, and asked one by one, what power resided in each of them. Ignorant and vain, and lacking Self-knowledge, they talked of their own prowess. When put the test, Agni could not burn a little piece of straw, Vayu could not move it, Varuna could not wet it and Sun could not dry it. Then came the turn of their Lord Indra, who unlike his satellites, had Self-realisation and lo!, the disguised Brahman was no more, having vanished, for, how could there be both Brahman and the Self-realised Indra in duality? They are one. The contemplation of external Nature with reference to the source of power will give one a glimpse of Brahman. In the inward approach, the mind at first attempts to objectify Brahman, and such knowledge of Brahman can only be indirect. Knowledge becomes direct and perfect only through an experience of *identity* which impels one to declare, "I am That. **SIVOHAM.**" To the Hindu the world is Divine as opposed to the view that God is external to the world—a concept common among other religions. God is indwelling in the world, but His immanence is of varying degrees, being more fully revealed in the organic than in the inorganic, more in the conscious than in the unconscious, more in man than in the lower animals and plants, more in the good man than in the evil one. The Divine Potentiality exists even in the worst of men, in the sinner. As Burns says, "And yet the Light that led astray was light from Heaven." It is impossible to prove or disprove His existence, logically, for knowledge of Brahman is identity with Him. Brahman, being all pervading, cannot deny us, but, usually, we deny Him, through ignorance, and this denial screens Him all the more from us. It is faith in Him and identity with Him that is the saving factor.

The Upanishads, especially Keno Panishad, attempts to indicate **Brahman**, by a subtle psychological analysis of perception, leading to His existence. This body of ours is without intelligence, like a cart. By whom has this body

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been made to move and work, and who is the driver of it? We have the sense organs and sense powers—all are instruments of the mind. The mind itself flows towards sense-objects, but who thus impels the mind? At whose bidding do the involuntary actions of the forces of Prana, in breathing in and out, in blood circulation, in digestion, in excretion etc., function? There must be a power at whose behest the ears hear, the eyes see, the mouth utters speech, the mind cognises, becoming aware of the phenomena. These organs are inert, without the Intelligent Principle behind them, enabling them to perform their allotted tasks, without making a mess. But this intelligent concious Principle, having no attributes, cannot be indicated or described or felt or seen or known. Its existence can only be intuited or inferred through the various actions and effects of our Personality, like electricity, which we infer, through its activities. Who hears is Soul using the ears: who sees is the Soul using the eyes: who knows is the Soul using the mind and the intellect. Hence, the Soul cannot be seen, heard or known by his own instruments, being the animating Principle behind the instruments. He is beyond their ken. But this non-knowability cannot deny His existence, but only affirm His non-objectiveness, being neither known nor unknown. Speech, sight, hearing, mind and intellect, all fail to grasp Him, though from Him all these receive their power and capacity to function. To know Him, that knower must be different from the Soul: but Soul alone is the Knower, and not being different from Himself, cannot be known. The real cognition of the Soul is pure Self-awareness, and in this state, there is no difference between objective knowledge and subjective experience. Soul being the light that gives self-awareness to all our thoughts and mental concepts, is blended in such thoughts and mental concepts, and has to be disentangled through the dissolution of such mental cognitions and modifications. In each one of our cognitions and modifications the Soul is implied as the witnessing and vivifying Principle, only so long, as such mental modifications remain as objects of our awareness. But, immediately, these mental phenomena, as objects,

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disappear, by being identified with the Soul, the witnessing relationship is also dissolved—the vivifying Witness and the salt dolls He vivified, having established their Identity, and lo!, there are no salt dolls any more, only one ocean of Bliss—the Soul. Our inconceivability of the Soul leads to Its mystery. One cannot say, "I know I." — it is impossible. The "I" can know everything else than Itself. One can know one's "I" only by cancelling all the projected objects by which one identifies one's Personality, but which are not one's "I". The mixing up of the subjective "I" with the objective "mine" is inevitable in mundane existence, and must be annulled ultimately, so that the cause itself becomes the effect, and the effect non-different from the First Cause that is uncaused. To know a thing, one must have a definition of it, to recognise and identify it, when apprehended. But with Soul this is impossible, as It can never be made the object of knowledge to get defined. However, the Scriptures describe what Its essence is, not qualities, attributes or adjectives—Soul is the three essential constituents — Sat, Chit, Ananda. — Existence or Being: Consciousness or Light or Knowledge: Bliss or Infinitude. Measure not with words, the Immeasurable whom no searcher knows by mortal mind, no gazer sees with mortal eyes.

The concept of Existence or Being is the most universal, leaving nothing whatever outside such existence. Awareness or Consciousness, apart from existence, can have no significance, for the thing should exist before it becomes aware of itself. Also, reciprocally, existence has meaning only when one is conscious of it. Hence there can be no existence without consciousness. These two are inseparable essences of the Supreme. The absence of Consciousness cuts at the root of all values, including Existence. Thus, the very perception (awareness) of the world phenomena by one and all is proof of an eternal Existence and Consciousness in us and in the world. Of these Two Absolutes, one is inconceivable apart from the other — yet both are not the same to be one essence: for, Consciousness, and what is made aware of, i. e, Existence must be difierent. In fact, Consciousness is non-dimensional, while existence has dimensions. Matter is cognised only in

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Space—Time relations, and forms the limiting adjunct to the spirit. The Spirit or Soul is unlimited, infinite which is the third essence predicated of It. There can be no bliss in the finite. It is the unlimited, infinite that can be bliss. Anant is Anand. Pure conscious existence is Bliss — **SAT, CHIT, ANAND** — *Sachithanand*, the Supreme. It is phenomena or finiteness that causes the opposite of Bliss, and absence of phenomena must therefore be Bliss.

The Three States of Man. Nothing that truly is can ever perish or change. The Real must be exempt from all change, and persist for all time. In his Manduka—Karika, Sri Gaudapada establishes the truth of the Soul (Atman), taking as subject matter, the Unity of Consciousness in the three states of Waking, Dreaming and Deep Dreamless Sleep. He postulates that without taking into account the whole totality of our experiences in the three states common to all human beings, our explanation of the world, based on the experience of one state only, viz. the waking state, will be a partial truth and an inversion of Reality. The waking, dreaming and deep sleep states with Turiya, the super-conscious state underlying all the three have been analysed in the Mandekyo Panishad, as pointing a way to approach Truth. In the **Waking State**, all physical and mental activities take place, and something in us, is also aware of all these phenomena. This duality of the waking state has to be completely annulled, for Reality is non-dual. In the waking state, the enjoyment is of gross objects of the external world by the senses, mind and the intellect. Cognition is outward, and Reality is screened by Avidya. What we experience is our mental make up, and nothing is permanent in this state, —change, growth and decay being the order. In the **Dream State,** we have a brilliant mental condition: man is inwardly cognitive, enjoying subtle objects. Here also, Reality is hidden, and something else is presented in its place. Dreams arise generally out of impressions and desires of the waking state, yet so incongruously mixed up and curiously fantastical, that the mind builds up a world, after a new standard of its own dream-state, having no further relationship to the waking state. We enjoy our dreams, as much as we enjoy

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our waking state experiences. The controlling power of reason and will is absent. Something in us is also aware of the dream state, and such awareness is carried over to the waking state. This Dream state is not real, because it and its experiences are impermanent, and hence, not the Truth. **In Deep Dreamless Sleep,** all the physical senses and organs become dormant in the mind — hence, we hear not, see not, feel not, nor do we enjoy. Yet, the Pranas are active in such functions as breathing, blood circulation, digestion, all of which continue, linking us with the waking state. The gross and subtle limbs like senses, mind, intellect and even Egoity, all take rest. There is only the Soul and Avidya, without any further super-imposed Vritti or mental waves, causing any phenomenon. Hence, the great balm-like effect of deep sleep — its blissful calm repose, hinting at the peace enjoyed in the Super-Conscious or Samadi State. In the deep sleep state, our real Consciousness has only a temporary sway, for the state is impermanent. Neither has there been any inflow of extra Light or Knowledge, for we wake up just the same being as we went to sleep. Something in us is aware also of this state, and carries it to the waking state. Absence of dream is said to be due to relative lack of any intense desires. It is an intellectual condition with all experiences unified. Cognition is indefinite, but past experiences are not destroyed. It is from this state, we pass on to the waking state or the dreaming state, and it is thus the spring board to the whole phenomena of waking and dreaming existences.

The Turiya State is the base upon which all the three states rest. It is neither outwardly nor inwardly cognitive: nor is cognition indefinite as in deep sleep. Yet, it is not a non-cognition state, but possesses a self cognition, common to all the three states and present in them. Turiya state is the whole of Reality which runs through all the three states always. This state is peace itself, bliss itself, and knowledge itself. Adjectives that denote qualities are not applicable to this state, since qualities are applicable only to the conditions of the three impermanent states. Turiya is the basis of the Self-identity felt in the three changing states, and recognised as the Absolute, in the state of Samadhi. Turiya is the only

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Subjective existence — the experiences of the other three states are only its objectifications. Analysing all the experiences of the three States, a sense of self-identity on the subjective side is clearly discernable — the sense "I" runs through them all. This sense of individuality or Personality gives the hint to something which must be the essence, this Consciousness must be the source from which the world has come, and into which it is dissolved. This is Brahman, the Turiya State, the Permanent State. The objects of our waking state disappear in the other two states — thus the waking state is not permanent, and cannot therefore be the Reality. The dream state and its objects also undergo the same fate, and thus the dream state cannot also be the Reality. In the deep sleep state, there are no objects or external phenomena. All the same, in the three states, some subject is experiencing all worldly phenomena, dream phenomena and phenomenonless deep sleep, for we remember the three states, and no remembrance is possible, unless there be experience first. There is no Ego in deep sleep that we are aware of, like to what we sense in the waking or dream state: yet, something experiences happiness, and cognises the absence of all phenomena in deep sleep. Again, as the apparent Ego of one state disappears in the other states, for one of them, to cognise the events of the other two states, is impossible. Also, the experiences of the Ego of one state cannot be remembered by the Ego of the other states, itself not having had that experience. Yet, it is a fact, that we remember the experiences of all the three states, and this is not possible, unless there is a Subject-Self, a constant and permanent witness, who cognises all the three states, himself, undergoing no change along with the changes in the three states. He alone is the Reality behind all the phenomena of all the three states, i. e. worldly life. The world, thus identified with Soul, the Reality that is exempt from all change, and which persists for all time, must also be real in its essence.

The mind with its senses experiences a multiplicity and variety in the universe: hence, the rational demand for a background of unity becomes essential. This is what Science

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attempts to reach in the material plane. This unity must be the substratum of the experienced Reality in the external world. Coming to the internal field of mind in man, there must be something to explain the continuity of his life and history which makes him an agent capable of knowing and enjoying. And there must be an eternal back-ground to base the rationale of the agreement in the perceptions of the multiplicity of separate beings, and in the similarity of the processes of individual reasonings. This background cannot but be eternal, infinite, beyond time and space, beyond all local and temporal conditions. Thus, the Reality that is the substratum of the external enjoyed phenomena must be identical with the Reality behind the various internal knowings and enjoyings. The *Soul and Brahman cannot be two but one.* The necessity of a Subject is one of the strongest rational considerations in support of the existence of Soul-Brahman.

Duality or Illusoriness of the World. Satya and Nitya are controvertible terms, meaning respectively, Truth or Reality and Eternality or Permanence. That which is not eternal cannot be real or true. This world of phenomena is not really real as it is not unchanging. Waking experience is similar in category to dream experience, and dream is easily admitted as unreal. So must waking experience also be. In both the states, we are not in actual contact with Reality, whatever that may be. We only cognise ideas — the product of our mental make up. As Kant said, "Nobody can know the thing-in-itself". What is cognised is only the image or idea that is called up in the mind through the external stimuli. In the dream state, there is not even this external stimuli, and yet ideation takes place in the mind. The mind is able to cognise ideas in dream, without a corresponding stimulus or object. If so, why can it not create and cognise ideas in the waking state also, without an external stimulus or object? In both the states, the "objects" experienced and cognised are external to the cognising Ego. In the waking state, the objects cognised appear to be the same to most people, but so too, to a large extent, are the objects in the dream state, otherwise, we cannot have dream relations with

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others, or compare dream experiences which are understood by others. Similarly there is a difference and a basic conformity as regards the standards of Space and Time in the two states. Dream sensations are completely illusory, and the sensations of the waking state are not less deceptive. Materialists deny all higher Reality because they are not sensed, and when others deny any reality to the senses, to sense-objects and to the knowledge derived therefrom, they protest in the name of commonsense!

The Law of KARMA. Generally, a philosophical religion is said to be defective in its morality, because Ethics have very little to do with religion, being a code which is universal, to be followed by all, whatever the religion may be. But. Vedanta enjoins a strict moral code and disciplne, before one can even approach to study it. It insists upon good conduct which is the sign of spiritual life at all stages. The impure mind cannot reflect the image of Reality, while a bankrupt in mental powers is unfit to retain what he has learnt. Hinduism itself imparts to all life a permanent moral purpose. This worldly existence finds meaning only in expiation of our Karma. The transciency of phenomena explained the sorrowfulness of life. The law of Karma' or *cause and effect*, brought home to us, the reasons of our suffering, providing thereby a solution of the problem — not by suppressing action which is impossible, but by subjecting it to proper direction and control. Hinduism accounts for the existence of evil, suffering and pain, not as due to the mere caprice of the Creator, or chance, but to **an inexorable law of moral conservation**. If our present condition is the result for us, it can only be the result of acts done in a former life, and this is possible according to the Hindu belief of the eternality of the Soul and its transmigration. This Law of Karma has a marvellous influence on Hindu character. The Hindu will bear his sufferings with calm resigna tion, because he feels that what, without his own fault, he suffers in this life, can only be the result of some of his own former acts. He has a motive for goodness, because by doing good now, he can lay by moral capital for the future. Good or bad act is not lost, is not extinguished by death.

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Nothing in fact can be lost, yet, the operation of the law is not mechanical. Though the seeds of good and evil are sown by us, their growth depends upon God, just as the growth of natural seeds depends upon the sun, rain and soil. The law of Karma has gone to soften the sufferings of millions of the faithful, and to encourage them, not only in their endurance of present pain and misery, but likewise in their efforts to improve their condition,

There is a School, which believes, and with justification, in the **collective working** also of the law of Karma. Just as we enjoy so many of the rewards of good work done by others, we may also have to bear the consequence of evil deeds done by others, thus leading to the concept of the human race as only family — very true of the present. It also accounts for the working of heredity, of the perpetuation of acquired habits, and of the iniquity of the parent being visited upon the children. *The oneness or solidarity of the human race is the most natural feeling for the Vedantin.* The conviction, that every being has its true basis and ultimate reality in Brahman, is a great moral binding power, for the Divine Self is the same in all. We love our kith and kin, not alone for their relationship, but for the common Self that is in them all.

Freedom of action, which is the basis of all ethical values, is not denied by the law of Karma. Nothing that we do or think will perish with our body. Action in any plane must have its inevitable reaction, and **the Law of Karma identifies God with His Law.** We carry with us the whole of our past. Yet, Karma is not unalterable Fate, rendering religious life, prayer and worship useless or impotent. Prayer cannot stop Nature from taking its due course: for if we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption. Prayer cannot reduce the severity of a pain or calamity, but it does certainly increase our power of endurance, and thereby, make us feel less and less, the effect of the misfortune. Prayer, to effect a private end, is meanness and theft, for it supposes dualism, and not unity in creation. *As soon as man is one with God and His world, he will not beg for himself.* The consequences of our action cannot be transferred, but must be endured and

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atoned for, through the sorrows entailed in self-suffering. What then is the force of Karma? Karma is a principle which reckons with the context in which each being is born — his past determining such context, and conditioning also his future, in those respects only, bnt not all-wise. The Spirit in each being allows him freedom within the limits of his Swabhava which his past Karma has determined. His Spirit can triumph over the same, since everything is subordinate to the Spirit, if only there is the will to overcome the forces that try to enslave the being. The cards in the game of life are given, having been selected for our new life by our past Karma, but we can call as we please, lead what suit we will, and as we now play the game, we win or lose. It is never too late to mend. The future is not subject to caprice. Our old habits as well as our new choice govern our future — not chance. There is nothing like chance affecting human beings, in the sense of an unmeditated, undetermined, unrelated, uncaused factor, having nothing to do with the general scheme of cause and effect, operating in an irregular chaotic way. The universe is not one in which all the details are already beforehand decreed. No pre-arranged plan is being simply unfolded. The canvas of life bears only the broad outlines, and it can yet be enriched or impoverished. Herein lies man's freedom of will. Karma is not a philosophy of despair, which it becomes, when man himself grows feeble, and is dis-inclined to do his best. Then, despair is embraced as an excuse for timidity and inertia by men who fail to control their nature, their mind and their surroundings — whose control alone gives scope for genuine rational freedom of action. We are all real active developing lives, not machines set to some routine. In his definition of Karma, Sankara takes up the most rational stand that "ego" is the basis of tainting, binding Karma, and all actions where the ego has no play are Akarma which neither taint nor bind the Soul, such as absolute bodily wants, Nitya-karma enjoined by Shastras, Study, meditation and bajhans on God. Karma is all that total of a life, which is the things it did, the thoughts it had and the self it wove. **Karma and the doctrine of Grace.** Karma is self-effort, while the doctrine

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of Grace as adumbrated in X'nity negates all self-effort. In Hinduism, the Grace of God is bestowed only on those who reach the limit of self-effort—hence, the severest trials and tests to which a Bhakta is subjected to. Grace of God works only on the basis of man's self-efforts which are re-inforced by the Grace of God. *The Cat and Monkey theory* of holding their young is cited as example. The kitten puts forth no efforts, it is absolutely passive when it is transported by its mother from place to place, while with the monkey it is quite different. The young monkey must have a firm grip of the mother and on its own self-effort in making this grip lies its safety when the mother leaps from place to place.

Caste System In India. India is too vast in its area and too diverse in its races. It is many countries packed into one geographical receptacle. She suffers from the looseness of her diversity as well as the feebleness of her unity. Indian History, until recently has been that of her social life and spiritual ideal, devoid of politics. Her wars for thrones and dynasties passed over head like clouds over mountain peaks, and her atmosphere of simplicity and religious devotion remained unsullied in the main. Hordes of aliens came but settled down as humans, not as conquerors. The Indian Hostess has accommodated numerous guests whose habits and requirements are quite different from one another. Her caste system is the historical outcome of this spirit of toleration of different races to live on the same soil, allowing each to fully enjoy the freedom of maintaining its differences. Hinduism is a name without any specific content, a museum of beliefs, a medly of rites: it is the common name of **the United States of a Social Federation.** The clash of cults did not result in the complete domination of one by the other. The Tribal Gods became members of the Hindu Pantheon. *Each group sought the Truth through its own traditions.* The tolerance of symbols, legends and rites, sometimes repulsive, side by side of the most exalted flights of thoughts, has gone in the interest of those who cannot suddenly transcend them. The slow evolution of spiritual growth in man is a fundamental of Hinduism. It is highly democratic, with **its immense faith in the freedom of the**

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individual to choose his ends, and direct his course in the effort to realise himself. Nothing is good which is not self-chosen in religion. Mankind, being at various levels of spiritual development, must seek God at various levels, and in various directions. Its attitude is one of comprehensive charity. It accepted the multiplicity of aborginal Gods outside the highest tradition, and justified them as powers or aspects of the one Supreme. (Chap. X and XI). This brought into the fold all believers in God; professing many sects. All popular lores are treated as part of the sacred tradition, since each such tradition helped its adherents in the godward endeavour of the human spirit. While, hating compulsory conscription in religion, there has been all through the insistence on the broader Idea and higher form of worship.

Hindu Ethics is not biological or utilitarian, and it is this which has saved the Hindu society from disintegration against powerful odds. The ancient Varna system was a rationale based upon the **inborn in-equality**—physical, intellectual and spiritual, self-evident in men, resulting from their past karma and evolution. There is no room for a caste system in an industrialised society, controlled by wealth and labour, which wants to impose an equality by the process of levelling down of all to the lower Varnas, devoted to production, distribution and service, instead of levelling up, as the ancient system aimed, to the satvic status of utter selflessness. Side by side with the economic division of this medly of races, there came to be associated, a cultural ideal which gave to each class, its customs, laws, education, training and discipline, peculiar to itself, according to the traditions in which it already lived. Thus, the division based on varna or guna got more or less a religious sanction and a profound religious significance too. Normally, a man's social function and position came to be determined by environment, capacity, birth and character, but as there set in a more fixed stratification of society, birth came to be the sole rule of status. This was inevitable, as external signs are the only ones which are conveniently referable and easily determinable. Since birth is the most handy one in an

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increasingly conventional society, this hereditary principle which became absolute in the course of time, brought about a great gulf between status, on the one hand, and character, capacity and nature on the other, which gap was attempted to be made up for a time by education and training. Thus the caste system broke down, leading to complex social rigidity and economic immobility, into a chaos of castes, which today is an unspiritual falsehood. Spiritual evolution cannot be sustained solely upon ancestry, parentage and physical birth which are of subordinate moment. This outward social determination has become a flat contradiction of the Law of Swadharma, because the criterian has become a mechanical rule of birth. Besides the universal common nature, there is, in each individual, a principle and will of his own becoming, which guides his action and spiritual evolution, through varying self-expression. This principle and will is his Swabhava which shapes his Swadharma or spiritual aspect of action. To be unable to follow one's own law and principle is to lose one-self, is spiritual decay. The law of universality and the law of individual variation—the latter caused by one's own characteristic actions as different from the common run—are fundamentals of the law of life.

The Ancient Fourfold Order was concerned with the working of Nature, subject to the three gunas which divide humanity into (i) the man of Knowledge, (ii) the man of Power, (iii) the Productive-vital man and (iv) the crude man of Service. These are four stages of self-development, starting from the fourth stage of ignorance and service where Tamas exceeds Rajas with Satva only in the rudimentary form. Tamas and Satva are like darkness and light and can never co-exist, for the one is the absence of the other. Animal needs of the body predominate in this Fourth stage, but when Rajas increases to the diminition of Tamas, and consequent rise of Satva, we have the vital Production man of the thrid stage, striving instinctively for useful creation. Again with Rajas still more developed, and the quantum of of Tamus correspondingly reduced, with Satva rising to fill the gap, we meet the Warrior–Ruler type, the leader of men.

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Finally, when Satva exceeds Rajas, with Tamas pushed to the lowest ditch—for, none of the Gunas can be rooted out in Nature—we come to the man of Knowledge, the selfless worker after Truth. Human beings are complex, and we have something of all these four stages developed or potent in every one of us, though in most men one or the other stage tends to predominate as the ruling factor of the personality which becomes his character or Swabhava, and therefore his Varna, as determined by his dominant Guna. Every life must perforce proceed progressively through the evolution of these fourfold stages, and reach the highest stage where Satva predominates. As Nature's impulse is only to cause work and service, everyone of these four stages can become the means of satisfying the Swadharma of the being. The Indian caste system failed because of its failure to recognise the vital fact that human differences, unlike physical barriers of mountains, rivers, seas which are rooted and fixed for ever to their position, are subject to change and variation with growth and evolution. This elementary law of expansion and growth of life, not being allowed for in the caste system, more especially as it got stratified, set up immovable wall boundaries between the different divisions. While this avoided collision among the various members of the different divisions, thereby providing them with the negative benefits of peace and order, it deprived them of the positive opportunity of expansion and movement. Thus, antogonising Nature, who used her diversity for the world game of infinite permutations and combinations, Life departed from the unalterable fossilised divisions of the social system, and in its place is now left a dead cage of countless compartments, one opposing the other. The same fate has overtaken the assortment of the different Trades and Professions among the various castes which was sought to avert thereby all unhealthy competition and trade jealousy and rivalry which breed hatred and sow the seeds of deception. (*See also under Swadharma and Four-fold order of the Aryan Community*).

Swadharma. We are born in this world not without a purpose. It is for the fulfilment of our Swadharma that we have taken birth in this body. The external aspect of

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Swadharma is therefore something which has in a large measure already been decided for each individual. We owe so much to our parents, family, society, country and the world. Our indebtedness to Nature is to such an extent that it is impossible to repay same. Our duty to all these is our Swadharma, but its proper performance by us is beset with many obstacles such as our desires and our bodily attachments. We circumscribe ourselves into narrow circles of kith and kin, community, province, country etc.: the "I, Me, Mine" blind us, very much limiting our vision and horizon, arising out of our ignorance of the fundamental truth of our existence. The Gita undertakes to destroy all impediments that stand in the way of our performing our Swadharma which is action that is generated by our constitution, character and our spirit. To flout Swadharma is to betray ourselves and may lead to fatal consequences. Our narrowness arises from the concept of ourselves as the body: but immediately the Soul basis is adopted, the universe becomes "I", all differences being dissolved.

Desire is the ordinary motive for all human actions, and work born of desire must perforce cling to the fruits of such actions. The Rajasic persons work, because of the urge to enjoy results: they will act, and at the same time not forego the fruits thereof. The Tamasic are worse: they would rather give up doing work at all, without the prospect of reaping the rewards. The pure Stavic always act with full devotion to the work: they will not only not go after the fruits, but actually renounce same beforehand. The Sun shines, the wind blows, fire burns—all these perform what is essential in their nature to do i. e. their Swadharma, without any thought of reward or return. Looking to rewards renders such expectation a distraction, affecting the proper performance of the task—the selfish interest arising thereof rendering an objective and just devotion difficult. Anything done for duty's sake, and not for the mere benefit to accrue therefrom to one-self has a joy far more real than the joy to be extinguished on obtaining the expected reward. A skilful surgeon successfully performing a dangerous operation is over-joyed at his success much more than

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at the fee he would receive in any event. Thus, we say that virtue is its own reward. Only in the yoga poise, the performer becomes one with his task. A child, absorbed in play, enjoys an advantage far more than the benefit derived to its health from such exercise. Love is the basis of Swadharmic action and like love its results must be all embracing and universal. The place of love is only in so far as it leads to benevolence to all with attachment to none. Narrow affection should not cross the path of love, for affection leads to grief and fear. There can be no place for Himsa in the performance of Swadharma. Prevention and *destruction of evil is not himsa* but helps the evil to retrace the right path. If in serving one, we have to harm another or act unjustly, it is not love but passion that rules; so in patriotism, if to gain some advantage for one's country, one has to practice fraud and deceit on his neighbours.

The general rule regarding action is the same for all men, yet each individual acts not only according to the common laws of human nature, but modified by his own personal idiosyncracies, bent of mind governed by his environment, capacity, character, i. e. **Swabhava**. Actions vary thus from man to man, due to their Swabhava or personal factors. Hence, the nature, rule and function of a Kshatrya is different from that of a Brahman — each has his own laws of action — his Swadharma is dependent on his Swabhava. The great importance attached to Swadharma is in evidence in Chap. III — 35 and Chap. XVIII—46, 47 and 48, where the Gita declares that even if defective, it is better to work out one's Swadharma than the well performed task of another. Death from action in one's own law of nature is better than victory in an alien movement, for, to follow the rule of an alien nature is dangerous to the Soul, and contradictory to one's natural evolution, sterilising as it does one's growth towards the true stature of the spirit. That which comes of our nature is both right and healthy — not what is imposed on us by life's compulsion or mind's error. Chap. XVIII — 48 gives a reason why one should not lightly give up one's Swadharma to embrace another's. All actions in the three Gunas are imperfect: all our work is subject to faults,

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defects or limitations. Hence, abandoning our own proper work is wrong, nor is it condusive to the best outcome, though it be advantageous from an extraneous material standard. All undertakings in this nature-world are tainted, even, as all fire is enveloped by smoke, and it is not less advantageous to perform one's own task, taking it with its defects, than discard it in favour of another, not also free from shortcomings. All action must evolve from within, in harmony with the truth of one's own being, regulated by one's Swabhava or nature. Doing works demanded by one's own inner constitution acquires spiritual perfection and leads directly to the evolution and progress of the Soul towards freedom, since such work alone can be done with right knowledge and right motive. Whereas any work dictated by paradharma, even though well performed, in the sense of leading to greater material success in the world, is still inferior as a means of subjective growth, precisely because it has only an external motive, not rooted in the being. Only such action does not attract to itself sin, as is born from the being's own Swabhava: action that is foreign or opposed to one's Swabhava or Swadharma will only impede spiritual development and progress. Man's evolution lies completely in the spiritual plane, and to this end he must follow his own nature as that has been the resultant of all the previous processes of his existence — the sum total of all the samskaras — latent self-acting forces of past actions in his various incarnations. Thus **the Buddha** to have continued to keep to the world with all the royal powers and pleasures and burdens, would not have helped him or helped the world either. Better it was, he followed the bent of his inner nature and renounced the world. So was **Vivekananda** who did best to become the disciple of his master Sri Ramakrishna than shoulder the duties of a house-holder. The character of each being developes most satisfactorily under the discipline which suits its nature most, to save the being from its lower-self — its natural enemy. Our work should be according to the truth within us, not a compromise with artificial standards. Swadharma is not bound by any outward social or other forms of action, occupation or function.

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Action and Swadharma. Chap. IV—17 warns that the nature of action is too deep to comprehend, even perplexing the wise, because, its springs are unfathomable. The mother scolds her son for a fault committed by him, and a neighbour too scolds, using the same language and tone — yet, the reactions of like rebukes on the erring son are quite different, because of the differing mental bhavas of the sources from which they spring—in the mother out of love, in the other out of stern justice. The story is told about the great Tamil Poetess, who being hungry, went to a rich man's house, and was served with rich dishes by the servants with the utmost disrespect, indifference and unconcern for the guest. Her hunger, not appeased, she repaired, this time to a poor man's hut where she was offered a share of the poor fare, with the greatest devotion, love and concern, by the hosts, and her hunger was fully satisfied. Acts by themselves do little, but the motive, the bhava (attitude) behind, make them noble or mean, good or bad, deeply influencing the results. Man limits the virtue and power of his works by narrowing down his outlook and circumscribing their span and scope, by raising such walls, as kith and kin, friend and foe, caste and country —else, his actions and their results must have a wide reach. The faith, behind the act or its want, brings about the biggest difference in its effects—with Faith, the act becomes, his Swadharma, promoting his spiritual progress and doing immense good to him and to the world, while lacking faith, it is turned into an obstacle and a bondage, causing great suffering to all. Action is impossible of avoidance, but not so the fruits thereof which could be given up at will, provided it is dharmic action, for the fruits of evil deeds justly and surely recoil upon the wrong-doer. Hence, the Gita discounts Sanyasa which advocates the impossible, and instead, holds out the matchless device of renouncing the fruits of action, to conquer all ills, including birth and death. **All works in this holy world are divine,** and only in their performance we render them undivine by our wrong mental attitude. There is nothing mean, nothing undignified in a right action—the meanness or indignity being in the mind that views it so. A scavenger's swadharma is to move away, dirt and filth, to where they can no longer harm life ; all mothers scavenge in

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the interest of the cleanliness and health of their children. A soldier's swadharma is not one of war and is not essentially killing others, but being slain, if necessary, in defence of peace, justice and dharma. A lawyer's swadharma is to judge justly, rather than countenance injustice and promote strife. The Doctor's swadharma is, that at great personal risk to his own life, he should save other lives and mitigate their sufferings. With all of them, the profit or the fee is a due, but not become the motive force for such service, if same is to become their Swadharma. Unselfishness, or what is same, love, forms the basis for swadharma, and where the profit or the fee is made the sole object, such service degenerates into slaving, and its effect likewise deteriorates. A trader's swadharma is to supply and distribute the necessaries of life, giving true measure and taking a just price, but if he adulterates, and thereby reduces the usefulness of the commodity in supporting life, or takes advantage of a scarcity to exploit the public to his own greed, or gives false measures or sells things that harm life, he is turning all his actions into para or adharma and incurs sin. Action vitiated by dishonest and selfish motive, which hurts other life, also hurts one's own. Para-dharma may bring temporary gain and advantage in the world but is death to spiritual life, hence the Lord's firm injunction not to yield to the temptations.

Yoga is skill in action, is perfection in works; hence all work to be done must conform to the Yoga Way, to become efficient. Yoga is a self-acquired power ensuring the fitness of the performer for the task undertaken; it is a state where the mind, devoid of all bias and fear, untramelled by other pre-occupations, gets absorbed in the task on hand, concentrating all powers in its execution. With this Yoga poise all our daily tasks reach the plane of swadharma, helping us in our godward movement—else, each act adds a nail to the coffin of our spiritual life. The loud complaints of extreme inefficiency in the performance of the daily routine in industry, in government, in administration and in private service, all arise from the dissipation and diversion of the mental powers of the worker, away from the task assigned,

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to run after pastures new, or to welter in the unending worries of home and social life. That such unmanly neglect of obligatory tasks, escapes not without its due penalty, is hardly realised by us. Man cannot appropriate more than he gives up, for **Compensation is a moral law of stern Nature,**—the defective work that is overpaid has to be recompensed in various subtle ways—in ill-health, sufferings, losses, in fear and in the accusation of the conscience. (See Compensation below.) Advantage taken without merit or payment is mean theft, and having no deep root in the recepient, the next wind blows it away. The popular fallacy of deeming that a task dishonestly avoided is a gain secured, is an inversion of truth, and the sooner one is disabused of same, the better for him and his world. Under modern materialism, man is totally dependent on material means for his life, and cannot altogether shake off the idea of a return or reward for his work—but such concern over a material reward should not be the primary motive to govern and guide all his actions. He should have full faith in His Creator who by His promise, (Chap. IX—22) has assured that it is His duty to look after the wants and welfare of His creation. "I secure what is their welfare and good, the same being taken upon by Me as My responsibility." Man must have Faith, or else be an agnostic—there is no half-way house in this regard. Complete surrender, based upon faith, will alone allow Him to help us, even as it did help Draupadi, to whose succor the Lord did not rush, so long as her hands tugged on with the beastly Kurus.

Self-reliance: To believe in your own thoughts, to believe them to be true for all men, is self-reliance. Trust yourself—it alone can give you peace. What you must do is all that concerns you, not what others think of it or of you. In conforming to ways that are dead to you, you waste your life and your vital prana, at the same time blunting the edge of your character. The world may whip you with its displeasure but gather the courage to treat it as a trifle, of no consequence. Power is in Nature the measure of right and Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdom which cannot help itself. The Spirit is self-suffering and therefore,

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self-relying. Put yourself in communication with the ocean of the Spirit within you, than beg a cup of water of the urns of Science. Most natures are insolvent, cannot satisfy their own wants and hence lean and beg continually of others. Consistency is a terror that scares away self-trust. No one can violate his nature. If one will and one tendency, animate all your actions that may seem inconsistent, then, like the zig zag line of a ship in voyage, the course will straighten itself in time. Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gifts have the backing of a whole life's cultivation, but that of the adopted talent of another, you have but a half possession. That which you can do best, your Master has taught you. Who is the master who could have instructed a Valmiki, a Vyasa, Shakespeare, Kalidasa, Sri Ramakrishna ?

There is very close connection between **Swadharma, and the four-fold order of the Aryan community of old** which in a way answers the Gita ideal, for underlying both is the inner law of nature i. e., gunas. Slokas, IV — 13 and XVIII — 40 to 44 can never admit that the mechanical copying of the law of an alien nature will further one's perfection, and lead to spiritual freedom. The Gita sanctioned the caste system as an eternal and universal social order. The Lord avows that the four-fold order was created by Him according to the division of Gunas and active functions. This means that the four-fold functions of social man was considered normally inherent in the psychological and economical needs of every community. Society was sought to be stabilised on the four-fold functions, partitioned among four clearly marked classes, based on Guna-Karma. This was not peculiar to India. The four-fold functions are found in all societies, but the clear cut divisions of the classes do no longer exist anywhere, not even in India. **The Gita lays stress on the internal law of quality and spirit** which the four-fold division of the Aryan community or Varna system, originally upheld. The outer form of birth, having connection with the social order, has little to do with our inner nature. *The law of Swadharma in a sort denies the hereditary basis of caste.* The ancient four-fold order, on the socio-economic aspect of the society, recognised four natural divisions of functions —

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(i) Thought and Knowledge: (ii) War and Government: (iii) Production and Distribution: and (iv) Labour and Service — each assigned to those who were naturally called to it, by their Swabhava and therefore, became *their Swadharma, as providing the right means to their spiritual development and self-perfection.* The Gita lays special stress on individual nature, tendency and temperament upon which it sought to determine each man's place in society. Social existence was not deemed the higher ideal of life, as man was considered to be primarily a spiritual being in the process of liberation, while his social life was the means of such spiritual formation. **Life in society is only a means, an instrument of spiritual discipline, not an end in itself,** not an ultimate value. But modern man, working in large groups and masses, called nations, has lost his spiritual bearings, while social existence from having been a means has become an end, and the only end in life! Now, all the professions are embraced by all people — whether government, trade, agriculture or service, confounding the economical divisions of functions. All is ambitious game, with no reference to the law of the gunas, and the spiritual needs of the individual nature. Man or woman is now a thinker, fighter, producer, worker — all in one, the society deeming every one a bundle of activities, and demanding of each, an all-sided contribution, based on the modern ideal of a joint obligation in all departments of social life. While leading to a greater unity and fullness in the life of the community and an all-round superficial development of the physical needs and their satisfaction, it failed completely to take account of the inner being, and its spiritual growth, which it did not recognise, notwithstanding the fact that men varied the most in their internal disposition and character, and less in their external necessities.

In war, artists, thinkers, priests, merchants and servicemen, all are torn away from their natural functions, for it is a total war of the nations. The whole nation is disorganised — priests, instead of preaching peace and love, are compelled, against their conscience, to teach butchery and hatred. National defence preparations, carried to the extremes, become national suicide. In this atomic age, there are no

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combatants — the whole nation, including women and children, are fodder for the bomb. The old order minimised the incidence and disasters of war, as only the military caste was concerned with it. **The war of the Gita,** unlike modern massacres for economical and political ends, was a social function, which helped to elevate and enable those who took part in it, somewhat in the manner of present day sports in the World Olympic Festivals, and it led to the spiritual development of the communities, then regarded as the real object of social existence. War, then, was destructive, within certain limits, only of the bodily life of the individual, while constructive of his inner life, and of the moral uplift of the whole race. Though war is the extreme contradiction of the Soul's aspiration for peace, yet it carried forward the action of lives, since *evolution lay through destruction of the outworn and the putting on of the new.* Physical life and death of the body are not primary realities, being merely an incident in the history of the progressing Soul, repeated to enable it to advance towards the goal. **The Gita accepts the theory of the four orders of mankind** which is an enduring Truth, not bound up with any particular social system, but founded on the eternal principles of Swabhava and consequent Swadharma which define the relations of a man's outward life to his inward being, as action is only evolved from his inner nature, not from any external social compulsion. This is confirmed when the Gita describes the works of the man of Knowledge and the man of war, the ruler, not in terms of external functions like, learning, teaching, priest-craft, commanding or Government, respectively, but entirely in terms of internal character and nature, viz. calm self-control, askesis, purity, knowledge, honour, courage, fearlessness etc. The external functions are only fields, and the means for the self-expression of the inner self. In the case of the two lower orders, the description is reversed, going by the external functions rather than by internal nature, for in their case, the external values of their work occupy their life, more than their power of character and nature. Neither their work nor their nature is favourable to Sattvic or spiritual action, though even in their cases, as per Slokas Chap. X — 30, 32, there is no bar to their rising at once

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towards the highest spiritual freedom. Swadharma attaches no special virtue to the external form of the function, but all only to the mental attitude, or bhava, governing the action. The dignity of labour was most honoured by the ancient code. Whatever the task undertaken or imposed by external factors, that which mattered was not what one did, but how he did it, and with what motive and mental attitude. Thuladhara was only a petty merchant whose work was to measure out merchandise correctly. This mechanical external act of holding the scales even, in which he had the backing of his whole being — *the criterian for Swadharma* — made his mind assume the attitude of equal poise in all life dealings, which is the highest reach of Yoga. He became an yoga-yukth — the Gita ideal.

In actual life, we are confronted with the terrible pressure of external necessity, the rules and laws of our society and state in which we have to live. These often conflict with the inmost law of our nature whose development is thus retarded, and sometime even reversed. State, society and family all join in league to lay their yoke on our spirit, and we are not what we want to make ourselves, but what we are made by the forces external to us. The remedy lies in true knowledge of ourselves. The more we advance in this knowledge, the more the power of the inner spirit in us is felt, enabling us to overcome the inimical external forces of society and state, so that we can live more and more in consonance with our innate nature, acting according to our Swadharma. Only thus will our work become the self-expression of our true nature, and will be utilised to make it the means of the growth of our spiritual evolution. Habit is the rendering of action, more spontaneous and more easy next time. The tendency of the mind is to be economical: it loves to form habits, to save it the trouble of thinking anew at each of its steps. Ideals and codes once formed, make the mind lazy, enjoying complete security, from behind the fortification of habit. Thereby, the ideals become dead, losing their touch with the growing and changing life, and man is afraid of taking risks in new experiences which alone is true life. The useless accumulations of the lazy mind, which seek safety in its economy of

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habits, have to be broken through and discarded. Our present chaotic condition is a source of weakness, hampering our true nature and development, but the way out is not through legal fiats which are ineffective, nor through threats and force which stiffen resistance to the reform, nor through excessive doles which not only perpetuate the status-quo but dries up all self-effort, but through the spread of the Gospel of the Gita, which with its doctrine of Non-difference and Self-sacrifice is sure to bring about quicker results, through a change of heart; since more things are wrought by prayer than we dream of, and Sri Gita is very much more than a prayer. But who has the Faith and the patience? Impatience and lack of faith are leading to incorrect action, attempting to cure the ills of a millineum in a moment, thereby making confusion worse confounded, to the detriment of all. "Pity and need make all flesh Kin. There is no caste in blood which runneth of one hue; nor caste in tears which trickle salt with all; neither cometh man with caste mark, nor sacred thread; who doth good deed is twice born; who doth ill deed, vile." (*Light of Asia*). Our Avyyai's dictum runs:— "Two castes only make up the world — those that give up are great and noble; those who covet are mean and wretched."

The Pranava OM. (AUM). OM is the symbol and designation of Brahman, the fit formula for profound meditation of the Supreme, leading to the highest spiritual efficacy. OM is the basis of all sounds. A is the sound that emanates when we just open the mouth, the first movement of any speech, and, is pronounced without the tongue or palate taking any part. M is the sound produced when we close the mouth — hence is the last sound in speech. U rolls from the roots of the sounding board of the mouth, and covers all intermediate sounds in any speech. Thus, the three matras of AUM, represent the whole phenomena of sound production, the matrix of all sound forms, whatever be the language spoken. Hence, this Universe of Nama-Rupa, Name and Form is best represented by OM, pervading all words and things. The Pranava sound OM is the combination of the three fundamental vibrations, which blended together, represent in significance and sound, the Supreme Brahman. There

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is also the half-matra, or the inaudible conception, which lingers even when the audible OM sound dies away, concentration on which leads to the realisation of the Supreme, as *the inaudible half-matra represents the transcendental Reality, Turiya.* The three matras of OM respectively denote the three states - **A** of the waking state when the gross senses lead to outward cognition, **U** of the dream state where the being is inwardly cognitive and **M** of the deed sleep (dreamless state) where all the senses are dorment. **Gayatri** – the most potent and greatest Prayer-Mantra of Hinduism, composed of 24 sounds, divided into three feet of 8 sounds each, is also symbolised by AUM, each matra representing one foot, or Pada. Thus **A**, the first matra denotes the devotional songs and Hymns of the Rig Veda, expanded out of the first pada of Gayatri, standing for Bakthi: the second matra **U** denotes the second foot of Gayatri, out of which developed Yajur Veda, devoted to works: similarly, **M** stood for the third pada of Gayatri, out of which burst forth the Sama Veda, devoted to Knowledge or Gnana.

OM is a sacred exclamation, discovered by the Creator, for the benefit of the world: it is the quintessence of all the scriptures. The entire speech is comprehended by it, just as a leaf is spread over by the ribs. Ideas and objects, being inseparable from speech or word, OM, which represents all speech, also includes all objects of creation. Its form is manifold and universal. OM is the symbol and sound of both the manifested and the unmanifested, the conditioned and the unconditioned, the Suguna and the Nirguna Brahman. Identified with the two aspects of Brahman, it is the sure means to attain both. Everything is just OM, for nothing can be thought of without its sound or symbol, so OM must represent the Author of the Universe. As a mind-tamer, OM is the imperishable support and best means. The mystic mono-syllable is the Bow, and the Jiva-Soul is the arrow, with Brahman as the target. Meditation on the Soul, as OM, generates such a spiritual power, that it draws away the Soul from all sense-contacts, and shoots it right into the target Brahman. There is no other holy formula so full of sacred potency, so short and easy to utter, even by a dying

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man. All worship except that of identity is symbolic, and that of OM is the best of them all. Millions of words in all spoken languages stand as symbol for God, and OM is the generalisation of them all, carrying the substratum, the common ground of all these symbols, embracing the whole gamut of expression.

The Hindu Psychological aspect of Human Personality (Five Kosas). The inferences here are purely metaphysical, embracing the physical, mental and spiritual planes. Vedanta stands for a complete synthesis of all experiences, while Science deals only with a fragment of human experience – the purely physical entities of the universe. For Vedanta, external Nature exists for aiding the liberation of the maya-bound Soul, while *Science uses Nature to cater to the sensuous and baser material whims of man, and in this process, breaks the link with God — man's true source and origin.* But Vedanta lays stress on man's descent from Brahman, through the five elements – Pancha Bhuta – with a five-fold personality, a self-forged illusion, by dispelling which, man again becomes his true Self. The five Kosas, sheaths, coats or cases are common to man and Nature. **Brahman has covered Himself with these five sheaths in all creation:** hence, by stripping off the sheaths, one after another and proceeding to the core, man can realise the Supreme. Each coat penetrates and permeates all the rest, and envelopes the being, assuming the very shape his corporeal body takes. The Five Kosas are divided into three groups. Group I contains only the Gross or Physical Body Sheath: Group II, called the Subtle or Linga Body, consists of the second and third Kosas – the Prana maya or sheath of Vital Energy, and Manonmaya or mental sheath: Group III comprises the fourth and fifth kosas, called the Causal Body, and includes the sheath of Intellect–Ego or Vignanamaya kosa and the sheath of Primal nescience or Anandamaya Kosa. In the next birth, kosas four and five take part, the first three having perished at death of the body.

Kosa I — Annamaya is made of gross matter which gives the body shape, form and name. Matter is the food of

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Energy, being used up by it. Organism subsists on matter as food, growing and multiplying and reproducing with the help of matter as food. All organisms are dissolved into matter after a period of life of the organism. There is thus a fundamental unity in Nature whose immediate datum is the first kosa of *food or Anna, which is the Infinite's Aspect of Utility.* Matter is the basis and stuff of our environment. The Cosmic Being who is manifest in the form of food or matter, exists both as the consumer and the consumed. Food has both an active and a passive state. This dimensioned Kosa — all else are non-dimensional — **this body of all creatures, is both food and its eater.** Matter is the supporting medium of life and cannot be inimical to life. The material environment exists to be controlled and utilised by Prana or the vital Energy — Life. Matter and Energy function as mutual helpmates to evolve higher levels of consciousness. Food implies both assimilation and evolution. There cannot be division in Reality, one antagonistic to the other Universe is one — a Theophany. Food, Anna, Matter or Body is the basis for Nama — Rupa : it is the only tangible form to prove existence. Body is perishable, and it depends upon Prana, without which it becomes dead. It cannot be the ultimate Reality, and Materialism as the base has to be abandoned, though Science postulates matter as the final Reality. The body, built by food, is the first veil to pierce through to realise God, and should not be neglected, even by those who have reached higher levels of consciousness. A healthy body is the Soul's guest-chamber, while a sickly one is Its prison-house. This body is only our tool, and like to the worker, enamoured of his tool, and lost in admiration and worship of it, fails of his job, too much attachment to this body, and a blind service to the petty fond relations it brings about, become our worst enemies. No good worker can afford to neglect the proper care of his tool, and the Gita warns against the two extremes of utter neglect and cruelty to the body, as to its adoration and worship in Chap. XVII — 5, 6, where the Lord characterises all torture done to the body as one done to Himself. The admonitions of Buddha are very instructive, to dispel the wrong notion, that self-mortification of the body is a means to quell temptations.

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After giving details — most uncanny and gruesome — of the methods of some holy men, for the glory of much suffering, for the sake of the soul, he piteously asks, " wherefore add ye ills to life which is so evil ? Will ye for love of Soul, so lothe your flesh, that it shall not serve to bear the spirit on, searching for home, but founder on the track, before night-fall, like willing steed over-spurred ?" " Will ye dismantle this fair house, where ye have come to dwell by painful pasts, whose windows give us light ?" Then comparing the lives of the plant and the animal kingdoms, he exclaims, " What secret know ye that ye grow content ? None of ye hate your life, none of ye deem to strain to better, by foregoing needs ! But man, who slays ye — being lord — is wise, and wisdom, nursed on blood, cometh thus forth in self-tormentings !" (*Edwin Arnold's Light of Asia*). Persecution endeavours to cheat Nature, to make water run uphill to twist a rope of sand.

Anna Dhan and Respect for food is a holy observance : one must contemplate on Food as Brahman. *The reciprocal support of Anna and Prana is well known.* Prana is co-present with mater and both are really two aspects of food — food and its eater, Prana. The virtue of a householder (Grihastha) to give food for the hungry, and feed the guest, is proverbial Dharma in India : sharing food with others as well as other beings is the highest charity, since food is the support of creation. Destroying food, adulterating it, and thereby lowering its power of sustaining life are the worst crimes against humanity. All things in creation are related through food, which affirms both the unity and mutual dependence of such creation. He who gives food to the needy helps the divine plan, and obtains divine grace. Yet, too much food and too much commerce with the body reverse their roll, making them enemies to the Soul's march

The rest of the kosas, four in number fill the first sheath, like heat filling a metal piece, put into the fire. Each kosa forms a homogeneous whole, without part or limbs. The second sheath of **Vital Energy, Pranamaya is the supporter of all activity.** The vital force is the life, and brings about birth, sustains life and causes death also. It depends upon

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matter to sustain itself, and it cannot be the ultimate Reality. Vitalism as base is also to be given up, as it is only one aspect of Cosmic activity. Prana is the original source of the differentiated or phenomenal life. It is the energy of Brahman that forms both the substance and sustaining power for the phenomenal world. Soul entered though the top of the crown, which opening, unlike the other nine gates or openings of the body is closed at birth. This crown opening is the door of bliss — the happy gate through which at "death" the Soul passes in the case of the liberated Beings. The next Kosa is **the Mental or Manonmaya**. Mana is the internal power of perception and cognition, which includes as its instruments the internal and external organs of senses and feeling. Just as the Prana is functioning in every cell of the body, so is the principle of manas pervading the whole body. Manas is illuminated by the light of consciousness from the next sheath, but not so the first two sheaths— Matter and Prana which are inconscient. Only by an act of mind has Prana come into the material body to enliven it. What sustain beings through life are their mental actions and reactions with the environment. Yet the mind has only the marks of the Soul, being just an organ of knowledge, while its consciousness is only the reflected ray of the true Consciousness. It can be controlled and tossed about by the higher category of Ego — Intellect which is the next Kosa. **The Fourth Kosa of Vignanamaya** is the faculty of discernment, discrimination or judgment, i. e. **Buddhi** which is one of the functions of Consciousness — the other being the important factor of **Egoism** or Ego which partakes somewhat the reflection of pure Consciousness, as forming the centre of agency and enjoyment of the embodied being, Man has thus the notion of regarding his body as the "I". Agency and action are correlate. This Kosa is the experiencer of all works, through its agency and enjoyership. This Ego—sheath to which all the three kosas below it are subordinate instruments, being the first manifestation of the ultimate Reality in the realm of duality, is the cause of all activity. It is proximate to the Soul which functions, if at all, only through this kosa—the veil of ignorance parting them. The knowing power of the

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Ego depends upon how far the Soul is allowed to influence it, like to a needle obtaining power by virtue of its position or relation to a real magnet. The more the Soul magnetises the Ego and the Intellect, the more their real knowledge and power to do good to the being and the world. Hence realisation of Brahman is only possible, working through this kosa, containing the twin principles of Intelligence and Ego whose vital roles have already been dealt with. The Ego-self is the conscious principle in any living being and controls the mind, senses and body, initiating all activity in them. It is the centre of enjoyment or suffering but its sway is only over the particular being, and not universal. Hence it cannot be the Reality. After the death of one body, it along with the next kosa takes up another Nama-rupa to work out its destiny or desires, taking only what belongs to the spiritual estate of the being to the next life.

Anandamaya Kosa, the fifth and last sheath, is devoid of all notions of agency, ego or action, except feeling joy, as the fruit of knowledge and action. Such joy is the effect, and its cause is thought and action, performed by the other sheaths for the pleasure of this kosa, which only knows bliss that is not local or temporal, but bliss, pervading the whole personality. *Pain is the province of the mind and ego, comprising the third and fourth kosas*: the joy of this fifth kosa is positive, not merely the cessation of pain. However, the joy is but a fraction of the bliss which is the Essence of Brahman. Bliss is revealed only when the mind is calm, when both thought and action are killed. A violent mind is in the erring state. This and the fourth kosa form the causal medium for the next birth or incarnation of the Soul. By limiting itself to an individual body, this kosa too becomes divided and limited, and as such cannot be the Reality: however there is no higher category in embodied man. Our Soul seems to be bound in a sense, for if it were free, why should it come back from the blissful state of deep sleep and Samadhi to the miserable waking state, as nobody likes suffering. Sensuous joy and divine bliss are poles apart, and contrary too, in direction and effect, and are incommensurable. It is only the attainment of pure

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spiritual bliss that moves the universe. How thick the veil of Avidya or ignorance is, that divides this kosa of the spirit from the other kosas, especially Vignanamayakosa, depends upon the past karma of the being. Evolution is the process of thinning down this screen of avidya, and to make it disappear, permitting the direct rule of the soul, instead of the blind play of Ego-Prakriti. Matter (body) is perishable, Prana is unconscious, Mind is changeable, the Intellect-Ego-Agent is limited and subject to pleasure and pain: Anandamayakosa is also not universal. Not all these, but something else is the ultimate Reality, to deny which is to render existence aimless and therefore unbearable. Belief in existence should be based on belief in Brahman, who alone gives value to existence, impelling us to walk along the right path. Creation is an act of His divine will, but such will is not one of desire, as in the case of ordinary creatures. His Law or Will is one with Himself, and does not need accessories like desire to bring about the action of His law.

The THREE GUNAS of Prakriti (Nature). In the Upanishads, Prakriti is described as a Single Female of white, red and black colours, who is unoriginated, and who reproduced many, like herself. **Creation** is the outcome of the thought of the Spirit, and hence is not matter in its original form, nor energy—but at first **is a subordinate state of Consciousness,** *in a self-oblivious identification with the Modes of Nature.* These modes are only qualities—neither energy nor matter, nor physical nor quantitative. They are the link between Spirit consciousness and Energy-matter. These modes are a psychological power and the primary determinants, underlying all the qualitative dispositions in creation, and which, in the physical and mental world, account for the varying results of different combinations and quantities of elements otherwise identical with each other. These Gunas are an omnipotent idea of the Spirit, indwelling all Cosmos. All existences, whether physical, sensal and mental—but not Spiritual, are subject to the sway and limitations of these three gunas. In fact, they are the primary powers in existence, and the amount of energy is a secondary factor. The whole qualitative action of Nature,

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which is spiritual in base, is everywhere present, intertwined, almost inextricably, entering into all actions. Even the Cosmic Trinity,—Creator Preserver and Destroyer, each symbolise one Mode—Rajas, Sattva and Tamas respectively. Where the light of Consciousness seems to disappear, there Tamas prevails. On the other extreme, where active forces disappear or get quelled, and the stillness of the witnessing Consciousness predominates, Sattvan prevails. These are the two extreme positions: however, the predominance of one Guna does not abolish, but only conceals its eternal mates. Consciousness, and the three concomitent and inseparable modes, are fundamental factors in all creation. No being is free from the three gunas, which are present in varying degrees, varying from time to time, in the same being, now one leads, then another. The triple power is a triple cord of bondage *at the same time*. They bind the being, who develops an attachment to them, and to the results of their workings. Sattva attaches the being to happiness, Rajas to action and Tamas to neglect, error and inaction. Soul's consciousness is thus directed to their workings, in the outward and inward actions of life, mind and body. Nature acts only through the Gunas. **The whole agency and cause of our works are the three Gunas.** The Gunas are the iron wires on which the beads of our moods are strung. Without the proper mood, neither fortune nor talent can be put to use. Gunas prevail over everything, of time, of place and of conditions. They fix the measure of our activity and enjoyment. They are the veto or limitation power in our constitution, to restrain an opposite excess. The gunas are final in their own way, but they can be overcome and controlled if the Soul is allowed to rule the life. Into every intelligence, there is a door which is never closed, through which the Soul passes actively into life. The intellect is the seeker of the Absolute Truth, while the heart is the lover of the Absolute Good, and these come to our aid, and with their power, man can get over the nightmares of these gunas which are so base a state for the Soul. The succession of states is a trick of Nature, made into a necessity. In ordinary life, the sanity of the mind lies in the variety of its associations and experiences, caused by the Gunas.

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Raja Yoga or The Science of the Spirit. Science wants that if there is a God, man must see Him: if there is a Soul, man must perceive it, thus wrongly insisting, that God and Soul must be of the same category as matter and mind. And since they are not so, Science denies them. The methods of Science, through sense perception and intellection are unavailable in the realm of the Spirit, and Raja Yoga offers the means of realising ourselves, using as tool, the mind itself, instead of mind's tools, which are ineffective for the purpose. Ordinarily, our mental powers get dissipated and only by dint of severe practice can we concentrate our mind, so as to make it illumine our internal facts. To stop the mind from straying outside. and to throw all its powers upon itself, so as to reveal its own true nature, is an uphill task, since the mind naturally tends outward. It is much more easy to direct it on external objects, whose study is the province of Science, than to compel it to study itself. In this process, we first discern our duality — the separation of our instruments from ourselves. A part of the Yoga practice is physical but in the main, it is mental: hence; with most of us, the practice becomes difficult even at the outset, because our mind has been subordinated to our body. Our mental powers have vary little development, and we are not far removed from the animal kingdom. The Yogi feels, that with the development of his mental powers, he can master and have control over both the external and internal events, whereas, physical Science seeks only to control external Nature, using physical means. The Yogi and the Scientist have a common aim — that of controlling Nature, but the Yogi's sweep is much more, embracing the internal phenomena as well, leading him towards his spiritual salvation which is his goal in life. In Nature, there is no such division as internal and external: yet Science limits its investigation and analysis to the finite external world, even though aiming at finding the unity — the one out of which the manifold universe is being got up. Tackling only a part of the world, and even that shorn of all its vital embellishments like, beauty, love, feelings, purpose etc., Science hopes in vain to reach the whole Truth.

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Yoga practice has been systematised, and the first vital steps, known as *Yama and Niyama*, insist upon certain moral disciplines which form the fit soil, and produce the proper climate, for the *spirit* to grow. Yama enjoins non-killing, non-stealing, non-receiving of any gifts, truthfulness, continence and chastity: while Niyama imposes cleanliness, contentment, study and self-surrender to God. These are not only for the Yogi, but for the faithful of all religions, as enjoined by their religious commandments. though generally disregarded. Purification of the mind is obtained by bathing it in Truth and by exercising the above virtues. The modern man of Science, not only does not bother himself with morality, but denies its necessity, deeming it as the fiction of the rich to protect their possessions. Yet, without these moral disciplines as the basis, no practice of Yoga will progress or bear fruit. The Yogi cannot transgress these moral injunctions except at the peril of his reachiug the goal. Science increases the power of sense-enjoyment, while Yoga absolutely shuns it. For both, the body is the best instrument. An unhealthy body is the greatest obstacle for Yoga, though health is to be strictly construed as a means to an end, and not an end in itself. Man must keep the body as a fit tool, and himself be the master of it. **Asana or Posture** is a series of exercises—physical and mental—to tone up and purify the nerves, and the Gita refers to these in Chap. VI—8 to 14, **With man as the Laboratory and Pranayama as the method, Yoga starts its experiments and study of Reality, with mind as the instrument.** But mind, ordinarily is never free, being subject to the onslaughts of sensations, feeling and thoughts which keep it fully agitated. To isolate the mind and free it from the disturbances of such external factors, resort is had to **Pranayama or the control of Prana,** which sets the whole body and mind in motion, supplying them with the motive power for all their work. Breath is the most obvious manifestation of Prana, and is the Fly-wheel of this machine—body, and hence is the regulator of all motions and work therein. If in the body, this breath-motion is laid hold of and controlled, then every motion in the body can be regulated, and even stopped at will. Practice is the only means to progress in this control,

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and the proof will come by practice alone. Control of the Prana, or its obvious manifestation breath, will give us power over all our sensations, nervous action and also thought, thus reaching a state of perfect control over our body and mind, making them, our tool. Only then, our experiment can be said to be controlled, having isolated the mind, the object of our study, from all disturbances.

Of the Five Kosas, that of Prana is the infinite power, manifesting as motion, as gravitation, as magnetism and as thought. **The sum total of all forces in the cosmos is Prana**, which is the generalised universal force or energy. Physically, this universe is one, there being no difference between the material composing our body and that composing the plant or other objects. There is one continuous substance on every plane of existence: the substratum in the whole cosmos remains unbroken throughout all the different planes, testifying to their unity. Hence, to control the Prana in us, and make it obey us, is to possess unlimited power, since, by controlling this little wave of Prana in our own body and mind, we can hope to control the whole of Prana, and consequently all the bodies and minds in the Universe, as they are all in one unbroken Unity. Thought is the subtlest and highest action of Prana, and in the lowest plane of action, it is revealed as Instinct, which is unconscious thought. Its middle plane of action is that of conscious reason. There is yet a higher plane of action of Prana, above reason, in the super-conscious state, which can be attained through Yoga practice, which gives a push to the mind to reach up to this highest state. It is in this highest plane that we can come to realise the unity of the Reality in us with all Reality in existence. **This is the end and aim of Yoga, through Pranayama.** In the human body, the motion of the lungs is associated with breathing, but the common notion that our breath produces the lung motion is wrong, as in fact it is the motion of the Prana that causes the breathing, so vital for life. The force of Prana expands our chest and the diaphram, causing thereby the enlargement of our lungs which suck in the outside air, and we are said to breathe in. A motion of contraction, also due

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to Prana follows, and the air in the lungs is ejected. and we breathe out. Hence, the first step in Pranayama is controlling the motion of the lungs, through the control of the power which moves the lungs. The control over this muscle action will in time, enable us to control almost every muscle of the body, for all these are moved and worked by the same Prana. Nerve control follows hand in hand with muscular control. At present, most of us have no control whatever on any movement of our body, but the Yogi can bring all the motions of his body under perfect control, by directing this vital force of Prana to any part of the body, likewise withdraw it at will. Yogic feats, where man can lie buried under the earth for days together, hypnotism, faith-cure etc., all become possible, because there is no break between the various planes — material, mental and psychic — and there is an unifying medium forming the control path. The great prophets and sages weilded tremendous power through their magnetic power of Prana, and influenced and moved vast masses of mankind. *Meditation is one form of concentration and controlling of Prana.* Wherever there is life, the storehouse of infinite energy of Prana is behind it. By intensifying the action of Prana and concentrating its power, one can shorten the time of reaching perfection.

Prana is the primal Energy activating the physical, metal and other planes in Cosmos, and Science attempts to control only that part of this cosmic force which is manifested in the physical plane, by means that are material. On the other hand, Yoga deals with the manifestations of Prana in the mental and higher planes, by training the mind to reach the super-conscious state called Samadhi, when man is able to know all about himself — his true Self. There is a growing body of opinion that Science is not opposed to spiritual experience which it cannot challenge, much less deny, seeing that its province is limited to the physical plane. Even of matter, which is the object of its study, Science has not reached any definite conclusion, since concept of matter varied with the development of scientific knowledge. **Matter is now defined** variously as, a kink or backtwist in Space-Time, a wave of probability undulating in "*nothingness*",

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a collection of charges of electricity in nothing, or a system of Spacio — temporal events whose qualities are merely mathematical. These are so shadowy and unsubstantial, that we have to regard matter **as a construction of the mind,** a projection from consciousness or its selection from the noumenal world. Colour, sound, smell, taste, temperature, solidity are qualities not in the matter. Thus, from brute matter, we came to elements, then to atoms, then to electron and now to nothing — these have been the progressing concepts of Matter, which we do not and cannot know directly. The same is being said of the Soul and yet stoutly denied by Science on that very score. Mind is an editor, weaving a picture of the material world, from the code messages transmitted along the nerves to mind's sanctum. If **the fundamentals of Science in the physical plane are ultimately ideal constructions of the mind,** so can the fundamentals of the higher mental and spiritual planes be as they all belong to one continuum of unbroken Unity. Coming to details, Heat is nothing but the energy of motion of matter — the greater the velocity, the greater the temperature and generation of heat. Sound is only alternate pressure and rarefaction in the atmosphere, producing waves. Variation in length of these waves determines the loudness of sound, variation in frequency of vibration, the pitch, and variation in mode of vibration, the quality. Light and colour are electro — magnetic waves, graded in the electro — magnetic spectrum, at one end of which are located the Cosmic rays (radiations) of immensely short wave — lengths. At the other extreme are the radio and wireless waves of long wave — lengths, measured in hundreds of metres. Visible light rays in between occupy a very small range of the spectrum. Each colour has got its wave of particular wave — length and frequency. The waves themselves are not coloured, since colour is a pure mental phenomenon. This is the enigma to which Science has been led to, and still, its votaries claim that Matter contains within itself **the secret of Life,** and they put forward the following amazing theory :—

Any living organism has the following characteristics :— (i) Assimilation : (ii) Growth : (iii) Reproductivity by divi-

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sion : (iv) Adaptability : and (v) Irritability or capacity to respond to stimuli. The last factor enunciates that **the property of Livingness is inherent and immanent in Matter** and that chemical affinity is the agency through which this potentiality finds expression. This is how Life evolved out of Matter. The response to stimulation by mechanical contraction and electrical activity — in other words, irritability is found in all orders, even in the undifferentiated Protoplasm. This quality develops into the various sense organs, motor and receptor nerves, all of which work through electric impulses in the nerves. The capacity of developing *Consciousness or mind-like activity*, lay in the same property of matter i.e. irritability, which is similar to the response given by non-living matter, such as, metals and crystals, which conduct electricity and show signs of fatigue, from which they recover, when given rest. Again such stimulations are enhanced by one chemical (their food), and abolished by another chemical (a poison to them). *Livingness is associated with highly complex systems of molecular build up*, based upon mutual chemical affinity. All these characteristics are also well proved in the case of plants — the semi-living. No barrier exists between the physical and the physiological : responsive processes seen in life are fore-shadowed in non-life. There is no abrupt break in Cosmos. Astounding and audacious as the claims are, they yet lead to the same Unity in creation, but with Matter as the First Cause, and the goal of existence summed up in the Philosophies of the Will to Live and the Will to Power, denounced by the Faithful as Ausuric and Demonaical. **Materialism is the inevitable creed of the man of Science.** He is at his wits end to explain life — body problems, and what he cannot account for in his own way, he denies. To him there exists no such entity, as mind, Soul, Conscience and Personality, no sentiments like, love, beauty and justice, because, these cannot be caught by his instruments, the senses. His greatest obsession is, how mental phenomena, like thoughts and feelings can have power over physical entities, like mass and force ? Though different from the body and the brain, mind is not indifferent to them. Mind influences the body and body, mind. How is this possible,

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since the essence of mind is thought, while that of matter is extension or occupancy of space, and the two are entirely different in nature. Just as the Vedantist denies anything to be independent of Brahman, so the Materialist holds, that anything independent of matter, is a figment. In the matter of Evolution, he has advanced his own hypothesis. **The root cause of evolutionary process was the origin of variation**, which having occured, **then, natural selection and the survival of the fittest** afforded explanation, for the appearance of new species. *But how and why did variations occur?* Darwin answered that it was due to chance — a gradual accumulation of minute variations led to the origin of new species. Another author substituted sudden and abrupt mutations, while Lamark explained variations as being the outcome of environment. All Scientists rejected the intervention of the mind, and disclaimed the notion of purpose in evolution, whose process, beginning from the amoeba to man was brought about by the action of chance or haphazard mechanical agencies or influence of physical environment. Changes in organisms never spring from within the organism, but are always imposed from without. For Science, there is no Spirit, no purposive force in life. Only superstitious Faith in Materialism can admit such propositions.

The world's most amazing machine is the human body and the greatest wonder in it is *the Nervous System*, a knowledge of which is necessary for the student of Yoga, which aims at by-passing the nerves, in controlling the muscles and the movements of the body. In effect, it imitates Nature which sends vast mass of electricity in space without wires, now copied by man, with the aid of Science, in Radio, Radar and Television. Yogic power dispenses with the services of the nerves in sending vast masses of electric impulses or Prana within himself, and in this state, birth and death have no meaning for man, because death is that state where all nerve actions cease. That this is possible is readily seen from the analogous involuntary and automatic actions, where, by dint of practice-forming habits, man eliminates the interference of his consciousness, with great

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advantage. Anyone learning typing has to labour hard at first to place the proper finger on the proper types of the key-board, involving the aid of conscious will. But habit soon enables him to master the key — board and manipulate it at ease, and with great speed and accuracy, because habit dispenses with the aid of consciousness. There are other benefits too like, lessening the fatigue of labour in the performance. **All physical activities in Pranayama are accompanied by great mental concentrations.** Breathing in a measured way, in and out, brings a rhythmic motion throughout the body, rendering all the movements to be in unison, i. e. moving in the same direction: the mind also, impelled by the power of concentration, becomes single-pointed, converting itself into a will of tremendous potential. As breath flows in and out, in rhythmical harmony, the body finds its true rest, and relaxes — a relief that is not to be had even in deep sleep. Energy is thus conserved in the system to be put to use at the will of the Yogi. According to Yoga, and modern Science also, there are two primary nerve groups in the spinal column — one called Ida, the incoming Sensory nerves, and the other Pingala, the out-going motor nerves, with the central hollow canal, called **Sushumna**, carrying the Spinal Cord. The lower end of this canal which is closed, and stops at the sacred plexus, is triangular in shape, and is called **Muladhara** or Root Receptacle, where the coiled up reserve Energy-power, **Kundalini** is stored up. The other end of the Sushumna canal enters the portion of the brain, called Medulla, where the spinal cord forms a sort of bulb, not attached to the brain, but floating in a fluid contained in the brain, so that any blow to the head at this region will be dissipated in the fluid, without hurting this bulb-head of the spinal cord, called **Sahasradhara or Thousand petalled lotus.**

Existence leads to the notion of Space or Akasha, and all our ordinary sense perception, including imagination and dream, have to be in space, which is the ordinary or elemental space, called Mahakasha. There is also the mental space or Chittakasha, involved when one mind reads the thought in other minds, where the perception is of super-

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sensuous objects, in the mental space. There is yet a higher plane of perception where it becomes objectless, which is a perception in the Knowledge space. *Science begins and ends all its perceptions only in the elemental physical space*: but Yoga starts with the mental space, and reaches the knowledge space. Commencing with the perceptions of supersensuous objects, it leads to objectless perception or perception of Knowledge Absolute and Divine Wisdom. These are achieved along with the progress of the roused up Kundilini, travelling from the Muladhara, high up to Sahasradhara along the Sushumna canal. Ordinarily, all the sensations and motor reactions in the body are being sent into the brain and out of it, through the respective nerves, Ida and Pingala, but the Yogi strives to do without their aid, in order to get (himself) rid of the bondage of matter. As Sushumna is closed at the Kundilini end, no action can be induced in the latter from outside. The rousing of the Kundilini is effected in various ways: through Bakthi or intense devotion to God, through His Grace or through the touch of Perfected Beings, through the power of the analytic will of the Sage, through meditation as in Yoga, through prayer and through worship. Wherever there is the manifestation of extraordinary or superhuman power or wisdom, know that a current of Kundilini has been roused and sent up the Sushumna canal. The Raja Yoga shastra describes *the seven planes of mental development* of the aspirant, to correspond to the level of the progress of the Kundilini in the Sushumna canal. Of the seven stages, the lower three planes are situated (i) in the Navel, (ii) in the Genitals and (iii) in the organs of excavation. The mind and metal power absorbed in these regions are completely immersed in worldliness, i. e. woman and gold (Kamini–Kanchan) on which the life broods always. The Fourth plane lies in the heart region, and dwelling there, the being gets the first glimpse of Consciousness or divine light. The downward and outward orientation of the mind is controlled, but not completely nor always. In the fifth plane, the roused up Kundilini power has reached the level of the throat region, and the aspirant is now free from ignorance and illusion. Worldly affairs become distasteful and even disgusting to the being who is engaged in promoting the Will of the Divine in

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the world. The Sixth plane is reached at the level of the fore-head, and now the aspirant sees the form of God in everything in the world and at all times — and still the ego is not completely rooted out. The Seventh and the highest state of Yoga is attained when the Kundilini reaches the top of the head or Sahasradhara, on reaching which the Yogi becomes God-conscious, in Nir-vikalpa Samadhi or Turiya State, cancelling the three states of Waking, Dreaming and Deep Sleep, which are phenomena of mundane existence.

The Technique of Pranayama. Sit upright, otherwise the main passage of energy — the Sushumna canal gets obstructed. Let the spinal cord be free. Erect posture leads to success, while a stooping one imposes change of directions for the advancing power in negotiating the bends. (i) Breathe in and out in a measured way, so that the breath both ways, is rhythmical and harmonious. Practise this for some days. (ii) Breathe in through the left nostril, and slowly fill the lungs, taking about four seconds, at the same time, direct the mind to concentrate on the lotus of Kundilini, along with the thought, that a current of Prana, going down the spinal column (Sushumna canal), is violently striking upon the coiled up Kundilini. Hold the breath in the lungs, for about 16 seconds and no more, with this thought, and as you begin to slowly exhale, now taking about eight seconds, through the right nostril, imagine that you are drawing also the coiled up Kundilini power along with the breath or Prana. You may have to use the thumb and the fore-finger to operate the two nostrils. Repeat this exercise, with the role of the nostrils reversed, i. e. inhaling by the right and ejecting by the left nostril. Unless this has been done from our younger days, the operation will become difficult, but patience and practice will overcome all obstacles. Our minds have become externalised, and must be forced to give the utmost co-operation here, for mental concentration and imagination as described above, go a great way in deciding the result of the practice. The third exercise is to slowly inhale, and immediately begin exhaling, without the breath being held up in the lungs, as in (ii); instead, it is now held out, for the same duration, before beginning again to inhale — all the time,

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not forgetting the accompanying vital mental concentration, which with the physical efforts, render the Sushumna become the only passage for the flow of the coiled up energy-store, towards the Sahasradhara in the brain. As the Kundilini mounts higher and higher, the mind is taken beyond the senses and intellect, to regions where reasoning cannot reach. The Yogi cites seven planes or stages, already described, from Muladhara to Sahasradhara, to which all energy has to be taken to realise Divine Wisdom. The highest form of human energy that is stored up in the brain (Sahasradhara) is known as "**Ojhas**". The more ojhas one has in his brain, the more powerful becomes his Personality, exercising immense magnetic influence over all minds. Energy expressed in sexual thoughts and act, more often wasted by man, but not by animals, for pleasure, while deliberately frustrating the purpose of such action, if checked and controlled, gets transmuted into ojhas—the highest and most potent spiritual tonic that man can ever possess. Spirituality, intellect and memory among the unchaste, all wither out, and hence, the insistence on celebacy and chastity. **Pratyahara** is power over the mind, whereby, feeling and willing get controlled. All activities must not end in loading the memory only, but become mental power to control the mind and its instruments. Mind is incessantly active by its own nature, and if it is reduced to the status of a machine, its course of action becomes inevitable, pre-determined exclusively by external factors; but man can demonstrate that he is under the control of nothing, by effectively detaching his mind from joining itself to the centers of perception, from which emanate reactions, ending in mind's own slavery. **Dharana** is taking one thing up and doing it and carrying it to its completion. He who can become mad with one idea, alone sees Light.

The goal of Yoga is the complete suppression of the waves in the ocean of the mind, when alone it allows the Self to shine through it, in its true glory. Without such experience, the theist, atheist and the agnostic, all sail in the same boat. Yoga is restraining the mind-stuff from taking various forms of disturbance-waves called Vrittis.

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Brain is the metropolis of all sensations. The mind catches hold of some wave or vritti from the infinite store-house of Nature (world), absorbs same and sends it out as thought etc., *The real universe is the occasion for the disturbing reaction of the mind*, and vrittis are the waves and ripples rising in the agitated mind, when external causes impinge upon it. The bottom of the lake gets blurred when its surface is agitated and covered with waves: but if the surface is calm, then we catch a glimpse of the bottom which can be compared to the true Self, the lake to the mind and the waves or other disturbances to sense-perceptions, thought and feeling. All world-contacts make the mind turbid, and hinder it from becoming one-pointed. What is worse, the impressions of these contacts stored up in the memory, as past samskaras, stand up against all concentration of the mind, opposing our effort, just when we want to throw them out, in order to bestow undivided attention to some idea we want to work upon. This is because, we are repressing them that they react with added force. Waves of vrittis rise, and hide the Soul, but each wave reflects the Soul as being after its own image: thus a wave of anger makes us believe that the Soul is angry, and so do all the samskaras, giving rise to various ideas about the Soul. Hence, to know the Soul as It is, all the vrittis rising in the mind must be eliminated. One way of bringing about this is by making one wave (idea) so strong as to suppress all the other waves — fire eating fire, as it were — and when only one vritti is left, it will be easy to tackle with same. **Meditation** is the most potent means of controlling the rising of waves in the mind, which, if not destroyed, can at least be subdued, for vrittis never die out, ever remaining as Samskaras, stored in the sub-conscious memory. The more the relations we have with the world, the more these Samskaras. Our possessions more often end in intensifying the world, i. e. intensifying suffering. *By renunciation, we deny temptations*, by not allowing them to set up vrittis or wave forms in our mind. Vairagya is mental strength of resistence to the formation of vrittis in the mind. The mind can become vacant when it is full of Tamas, but that is a state of utter weakness and suffering, whereas the vacancy

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of mind grown out of mental strength is that state when, whatever impinges upon it, becomes powerless to produce a ripple, or disturb mind's composure, allowing no reaction, now, nor any seed or samskara to raise its head afterwards. All vrittis weaken the mind, while we gain the strength of all disturbances we successfully resist.

The Limitation of Intellect (Reason). Man lives in one or other of the three states — the waking, the dreaming and the deep sleep or the rare Samadhi state, and paralleling these, are the conscious, the sub-conscious and the Super-conscious state of man. In all life phenomena, the ego and the intellect, — together forming the Vignanamaya Kosa — bear a vital role, always acting hand in hand, and their play increases or decreases, according to the nature of the being. Ego which is the seat of desire — the cause and origin of all action in the phenomenal world, is most prominent in the waking conscious state, and just there, **reason** also has its full force. In the sub-conscious state, ego is sub-merged, and reason likewise gives place to the faculty of **instinct** which governs all action in this state. When man works himself up to the rare super-conscious state, known in Yoga as Samadhi, where ego is completely absent, reason becomes inoperative, yielding place now to the higher faculty of **Intuition** in man. The conscious active middle plane, where all action is voluntary, and is accompanied by the positive interference of the ego, becomes the field of reason (Intellect). **Egoism and intellect have sway only in this middle plane of waking consciousness,** while below and beyond this line of self-consciousness, both ego and reason have little play. Thus the field of reason in man is narrow and limited, like his very limited vision having a very narrow range on the electro-magnetic spectrum. If life be a chance, a fortuitious combination of atoms and protein molecules, where, then, is the room for ethics, for morality, for good behaviour, for unselfishness, for love and for the sense of wrong and right? Unselfishness or love is the one idea upon which all ethics, all human thought and action hang upon. My utility is to be selfish, if by utility, we mean securing the greatest amount of happiness, through wealth

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and power for oneself. Reason has no answer for such fundamental questions of life, yet man feels instinctively that the law of the jungle cannot support human society for a single moment. His intuition guides him to the same purpose, while reason, finding itself discredited, sows the seeds of discord, making man miserable. Reason has therefore no answer for the vital problems of life — all the answers in this regard have to come from beyond the range of reason, from the super — conscious state of man : yet, such answer comes from within man himself, not from beyond his own being. Reason is a tremendous dead wall, and man has to by - pass it and go above it to find the Truth in full faith. Intellect helps man to argue, and argument only disturbs the mind. Cause or instrumetality arises only in the middle plane of thought and intellect (Reason), and Reality is beyond cause and effect. In the higher plane of super — consciousness or unity, where there is no cause and effect relation and no dulaity, man can meet the Truth. The hurdle to realisation is within us — in the limitation of our intellect, which must give up its attempt to reach Reality through intellection. To one bound by the intellect (reason) and the senses, the cyclic nature of all world phenomena, the round of births and deaths, and of misery and happiness in close sequence, all become real, because subject to Maya, or perversion. Sub - conscious involuntary actions are born of instinct, conscious voluntary acts are born of opinion, through reason, but **Intuition** in the super - conscious state is the outcome of the relation of the Self in man to the Universal Self. It is the supra — rational, supra — conscious way of knowing, not a mental faculty, like reason or instinct, but the heightened power of cognition, involving all the faculties in man — of feeling, thought, will, emotion — all unified by the power of concentration and meditation upon the Supreme in man himself. All the three faculties belong to one and the same man, one faculty developing into the next and so on. Real instinct and real intuition or inspiration never contradict reason, but only fulfil it, being in harmony with reason, since they all spring from the same root, growing out of the same stem. Identity with God, which is the goal of man is never reached through knowledge alone, for its instru-

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ment. the intellect is finite and limited. The infinite can be known by joy, by love, which is fusion and identification. In knowledge, there is room for doubt, but not in love, in identity. This "I" of ours toils hard, undergoes no end of sufferings to attain its home, but so long as it is unable to identify this home, as God's Home it can find no rest, no peace. In our vain endeavours to grab that which is for all, we hurt others and are hurt in turn. Man without God means a mishap, and Scienee with its instrument, reason, only aggravates our mlsery.

Compensation:— The popular view is fallacious and its absurdity is patent, when it believes that the wicked and the bad are more successful in this world, enjoy wealth, pomp and luxury for being unprincipled, while the good, the saintly and poor are miserable: that justice is not done here and now, but that a compensation awaits them in the next life, where the wicked and sensuous will exchange places with the poor, good and the saint as a punishment ?, or as a reward? The assumption that the bad are presently prosperous and successful, which goads many innocents towards wickedness, is an unwaranted concession, hinging upon what constitutes a manly success in life. The fallacy lies in ignoring the presence of the Soul, the unobserved Consciousness in man. All of us feel at times the falsehood of the popular opinion but are unable to demonstrate the same. **Polarity is an admitted fact in every part of Nature.** An inevitable dualism bisects Nature, so that each thing is a half, and suggests another thing to make it whole. Thus, Spirit wants matter, man woman, motion rest, etc. Every unusual gift in nature is counteracted by some compensatory defect: surplus at one part is paid out by a reduction from another place. What is gained in power is lost in time (speed): cold climate invigorates, but hot climate enervates. Every evil has its good. There is no pleasure that has not an equal penalty put on its abuse. **Nature keeps her balance true.** If the good is there, so is the evil: if the affinity, so the repulsion. All things are moral: the Soul within is our inner voice, our sentiment, which outside us operates as the universal Law of Nature. Justice

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is not postponed to next life—every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed in silence and certainty. A perfect equity adjusts its balance in all parts of life, here and now only. Retribution is a moral necessity. The Soul strives to live and work for the general good, while the ego aims at working for oneself, for one's private joy. Man cannot get an inside without an outside. If man escapes nature's inevitable laws in one point, they attack him in another more vital part. Man's attempt at separation of the act from its consequences is mad: the sensual allurements of an object cannot be secured without its sensual hurt: the mermaid's head cannot be enjoyed without the lashings of her dragon's tail. In Nature, there is this inevitable back-stroke, the kick of the gun. In Nature, everything is a bargain—the doctrine of Nemeses is in full play. If riches are increased, they are increased that use them. Our thoughts, acts and words are like the thread-ball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag. *You cannot do wrong without suffering wrong.*

Everything has two sides—a good and an evil. Every advantage has its tax: yet, there is no penalty to Virtue, for thereby we only add to the good of the world. There can be no excess to love, none to knowledge. All material good obtained without mead or payment, having no root, the next wind will blow it away. *No one is a real sufferer except by his own fault.* All things in Nature have two planes: the inner plane or the thing itself, its real nature, its constitution and character—the outer, which though inseparable from the inner, is still external to it, being made up of the environments and circumstances. Every act integrates itself first in the thing or real nature, then only in its external circumstances. The retribution due to evil acts, as it takes place in the thing itself, and suffered immediately by the inner nature, through the heart and mind of the being, is not open and visible and not perceived by the world, and therefore denied, while the retribution in the external circumstances, that is perceivable by all, often follows late, long after the offence, and though certain to follow, is also missed by the world, unable to relate it to the original

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misdeed. **But crime and punishment grow out of one stem and cannot be severed:** the end persists in the means, the fruit in the seed, the effect in the cause. The world will be whole and refuses to dispart, but man's ingenuity wants to detach, sunder and act partially, to get a one end without the other. Fear is the surest form of punishment in most cases. There is rottenness where fear appears, indicating great wrongs, which must be atoned for. The balance of justice works through the heart and mind of man. Human labour is a perfect example of the universal principle of Compensation—the doctrine that everything has its price. Virtue and Nature join to assume a hostile front to vice. We gain the strength of the temptation we resist. Put God in your debt for actions beyond your control.

Modern Progress: Society never advances: it recedes as fast on one side, as it gains on the other. Society acquires new arts, but loses old instincts. For everything that is given, something is taken. The comforts and conveniences of the modern has robbed him of his ancient strength. His instruments of locomotion have made him lose the use of his limbs. His note-books and Library impair his memory, while overloading his wit. Arts and inventions are only the costume of a period, not adding to the real man, to his character or Personality. Society, like the wave of the ocean, moves onward, but man's nature, like the water producing the wave, remains and moves not. Men have looked away from themselves and looked at things so long, measuring their esteem of each other by what each *has*, and not by what each *is*. A cultivated mind hates its material appendages, seeing that physical property is accidental, while what he is, is his own acquisition which is never taken away. Nothing can bring happiness and peace, but yourself and the triumph of principles. Conquest of external Nature may render physical pain and hunger less, but there remains the poignant thirst of the Spirit, unquenched. (*Emerson*)

Thoughts from Marcus Aurelius. Whatever be the solution of the great mysteries of the origin, cause and

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purpose of the universe, and of man's life in it, there is no doubt that this **Universe is One,** and all things in it are necessarily and closely related, that mankind is one, with the added bond of community of mind, more powerful even than the fundamental material unity, and finally that man's higher nature stands undisputed, raising him far above the animal kingdom with which he shares his lower nature, whenever he degrades himself. Fundamentally, rational and social, moral and spiritual, man, yet, needs careful watching and control over his temper and passions which are inconsistent with his affections, kindness and love and which over-power and enslave his higher nature. Every instrument, tool or vessel, serving the purpose for which it was designed, fares well. Man also designs, but he is unable to keep himself inside his tools. But in Nature, the Power that designed the tool, is within and remains there. If you put yourself under its direction every thing goes well with you. Different men act in different ways, and He who governs the universe, will, in any case, make good use of them all, and receive them into some part where they fit, in His scheme. We are made up of two parts, the material and the causal: the causal is more in harmony with the Divine in us, while the material (the body) is only the scaffolding in the service of the causal, to be dismantled. Disorder is unnatural in Nature. The idea of self-reproach, or that of blaming others meant, finding fault with ordered Nature. Our proper business is to act cheerfully without complaining. Self-sufficiency is only one-half of the ideal, for **to keep oneself in harmony with all the world** in the other half. Be one who needs neither oath nor witness to hold you to the Truth. Man strives to conjecture the thoughts in the minds of others, and to investigate things external to himself, instead of being content to turn his thoughts inward to the Godhead within himself. He usually seeks a retreat, in places external to himself: but no spot will be so peaceful, more free from bustle, or so readily available without notice, than a retreat within himself, particularly for him, who has already stored great thoughts within his mind, by dipping into which he is at once in perfect ease. Ease is nothing else than the good ordering of the mind. Renew the acquaintance with thyself, by giving

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thyself constantly this retreat. Never depend, that another should do or not do anything. He is a beggar who has need of another, and has not of himself all things serviceable to his life.

We offend against our divine nature, when we are overcome by pain or pleasure, by anger or passion. **Nearer to dispassionateness is nearer to the Supreme.** Keep your mind unstained by pleasure, unscarred by pain, untouched by selfishness, insensible to any malice, unsullied by any passion, dyed to the depths with indifference to all that befalls. If your mind be bared of the carcase of flesh—this body encasing you, you will strip yourself of much distractions—your apparel, dwellings, repute and such wrappings and stage-shows, which impose upon you to slave for them. Virtue is not fair only through being praised, nor damaged through blame. Does the rose grow worse if it is not praised? Take away the opinion and the consciousness of having been harmed is gone: take away the consciousness of having been harmed, and the harm vanishes. Unless I opine, that what has befallen me is an evil, I am not harmed, and it is in my power not to opine so. The mind can be tranquil even under torture of the body: but such cruelty, and suicide as a permissible means of escape from the world, is an error arising out of our weakness to bear with the misfortune, a failing in our faith in the Divine in us. He who runs away in fear is a deserter. The chief object of the reasoning faculty in us is to abolish fear. It is not other's action which disturbs us, for it is in their guiding faculty, not in ours, but our opinion of such action; and our opinion lies within our power to be kept out of us. Whatever befalls, think not that it is a misfortune, but to bear with it well, is good fortune. Many among the medicines are disagreeable, but all the same we welcome them in the hope of health—so too, welcome hard destiny as being good to the universe. **The code of Nature is the will of God,** and the material universe moves subject to this law. God rules through this law, and He disappears from this scene, but is ever present in the Law itself. *The universe is a cosmos, not a chaos.* Everything is well ordered and regulated—each has its own place, and its definite

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function, keeping **the balance in Nature.** In fighting malaria by spraying D. D. T., mosquitoes and flies vanished for a time, while lizards, ant and cockroaches which were making a meal of the flies and mosquitoes got wiped out making the problem worse than before. In an orchard treated similarly to destroy the pests, the beneficient toiler — the honey bee was exterminated, leaving the more powerful but harmful spiders on the field. Snakes that were feeding upon the field-rats, being killed, the loss to the crop was greatly increased. Sparrows in China were saboteurs but their extermination enormously increased the insects and worms whose havoc became very much more than that of the sparrows. Hence, balance in Nature cannot be disturbed. How wonderful is the relation of pleasure to pain, which seems to be its opposite! Both will not come to a man together, but if man pursues the one and gains it, he is almost forced to take the other also, as if they were two distinct things united at one end. Such is the delicate balance maintained in the dualism of Nature. Man in vain contends to divide the inseparables, birth and death, pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow.

Cause of Creation i. e. Action. Creation is a divine movement, opening out from God and returning to Him. Action is the expression of creation, and the cause of creation is the cause of action. The multiple Kshara takes delight in the customary disturbances in Nature's life, and because of such pleasure, He gives sanction to the troubled play of Nature, and such play is continued till this God-directed movement returns to Him. Nature does nothing except for the pleasure of her Lord and lover, and only with His sanction. The constant joy of the Soul (Kshara) in the dualities is the secret of the mind's pleasure in living. Success without struggle, joy without sorrow, soon become insipid, fatiguing and cloying to the mind. Happiness in its very essence is relative in the worldly plane, and is dependent upon the experience of its opposite by the mind. Yet the Soul's pleasure in life remains constant, whatever be the nature of the disturbance and its result—the reaction of which affects only the mind. What inflicts pain is the

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mind, and what suffers is also the mind. The Soul is impartial, impersonal, desireless and perfectly equal, whereas the modes of Nature are in their native character perturbed and unequal, and all their actions are similarly coloured. This inequality, or what is same, **duality or Raga-dwesha is a device of Nature for self-protection of the being.** From adverse strokes which lead to pain and dislike, life recoils, otherwise it must embrace destruction. Similarly, favourable touches leading to joy and pleasure are laid, as baits to overcome man's native inertia and inactivity of a Tamasic nature, to lead him into rajasic action, which alone can support life in the world. Action that originates from the inequality of the gunas can be in one of two planes:— either, the gunas themselves dictate the action as well as execute it: or action is directed from above the gunas which only carry out the same in obedience to the higher Will. All works in the lower plane are subject to the chain of cause and effect, i. e. the coupling of works to their fruits, when action is carried on at the behest of the gunas which thus control and decide the fate of the life. In the Sankhya, where the Purusha has no lordship over Prakriti, action is done only in the lower worldly plane, or else, action is suppressed, since the gunas of Nature possess a coequal status with the Purusha, not admitting obedience to Him. But the Gita goes far beyond the Sankhya notion of the mechanical determinism of Nature, and affirms that Nature never mechanically determines its actions, but that the Divine Will inspires and guides Nature in all her acts. Action in the higher plane is thus made possible, for the Soul is not only a witness but the master, and Nature is only the executrix. Action from the higher plane, where the dualities of the lower plane, with their double standards do not have play, results from a mental equipoise, which includes the power to accept equally all the dualistic touches of the world, by rising above them, while being in them and in the world. The Lord just called upon Arjuna to adjust his mental poise, and to orient the cause of action from the mundane plane of the gunas to the higher plane of the spirit. Arjuna's despondency and refusal to fight, arose out of the conflicting double standard in vogue in the world. He decided to

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abstain from battle, believing it a sin to gain victory by the slaughter of his kith and kin. He might as well have decided otherwise, and chosen to fight them on the score, that it was the Dharma of the warrior-caste not to allow injustice and evil to triumph. Both these irreconcilable worldly standards had no application to Arjuna after his enlightenment, for he placed himself above all worldly motives, considering himself as the instrument of the Divine will. He gave up all personal desires and ends, and only perceived in the action before him, that some were helping, while others were opposing the march of Dharma, himself chosen by the Lord to help its progress, which gave no room for his personal likes and dislikes, his love and hatred. Man is cowed by the very name of action, not knowing that it is only a trick of the gunas. The ancestor of every action is a thought. To think is to act. But what guides your thought? Where from do you take the cue? At whose call do you act? – at the call of the First Cause, or at the call of the flesh? The line a man must walk in life is a hair's breadth. To fill the hour with good deeds – that is happiness. A Confusion arises from the difference in the plane of action. From the stand-point of the intellectual plane, every thing is relative, admitting a double standard, while from the stand-point of the inner being or Conscience, it is the essence, the essential and the Absolute, that matters, leaving no room for the double standard. All routine actions of ours make no impression and are forgotten very soon, but the thoughts and acts which take deep root in us and to which we always return, will leave their lasting impression and be carried to our next birth as part of our spiritual estate and heritage.

The un-enlightened and the Enlightened contrasted : The unenlightened ignorant man of the world is impelled by desire, and so impelled, acts with intent to enjoy the fruits of his actions, assuming a sense of responsibility of himself being the actor as well as the enjoyer of the fruits of actions, which he is covetous to keep to himself, never giving up same to others. Thus tainted and bound by his actions, he has no freedom, and is compelled to experience the joys and sorrows, the pleasures and pains of life. He has no peace. Whereas,

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the enlightened being living in knowledge that is Light, subordinates his desires, yet acts, with no desire to enjoy the fruits of such actions, in the full knowledge that Nature is the executrix and that the Divine through his manifested world is the enjoyer of the fruits, and in this knowledge feels self-delighted. Because, all acts are performed by Nature and offered by her as sacrifice to the Divine in the world, though physically doing works, the being is not tainted and bound by same. A free being, having true knowledge, he enjoys the bliss of calm peace in the world. The story of the marriage of Goddess Lakshmi is an apt illustration where the moral is obvious, viz., that *desire is derogatory to man's true nature,* **while desirelessness is no bar to come by what one deserves.** Sri Lakshmi knew her Lord, yet had to go through the formalities of the times, before obtaining her husband. Her Swayamwara was announced, without disclosing beforehand the conditions on which she would bestow herself. All sorts of suitors flocked to the place, anxious to get her, but Lord Vishnu did not even turn up. She then announced her will that she would bestow herself on him who did not desire her. Leaving all the assembled suitors as unfit, she went out in search of Lord Vishnu and soought him and married him.

Love knowledge and Wealth. Every one can love without limit, everyone can become wise, but not everybody can become rich *at the same time*. The notion that all can be rich simultaneously is absurd, not admitted by the term 'rich', which can work only through inequality and difference. The fact that all Americans are rich is only relative, and has meaning, because there are other undeveloped nations in the world in need of American dollars. As expressed in another context, material possessions leave no margin of satisfaction — the law of diminishing returns of utility operating, since **material wealth meets only a limited need of the human being.** Not so with knowledge and with love, which leave a margin of satisfaction that is unlimited, nay infinite, so that there is no excess to knowledge, no excess to love. The 'moha' for matter of limited virtue is the bane of modern civilization, from which delusion man

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must be immediately delivered, overcoming the pull of Science, leading him into bondage to his body. Science blindly converted means into ends, and by such inversion turned them into hindrances to man, instead of being aids to reach his goal. Materialism postulates that avarice and desire for material wealth are constant elements in human nature, while social affections are accidental and disturbing elements. In a house with but a crust of bread, need there ensue a fight for the crumb, and only the strongest of the lot get it and eat it, using violence and cunning to obtain the advantage? It is unfair for Science to consider man as no better than dogs and swine. Materialism endeavours to deduce rules of action from balance of expediency, rather than the balance of justice and the affections of one man to another. But man has as his motive force the Soul, which is an agent of incalculable power, which upsets the mechanical law of cause and effect of Science. Not for wealth or for power will this Soul yield the largest amount of response: only affections can bring about any reaction on it. The person who gently treated is ungrateful, treated ungently becomes revengeful: and the servant who is dishonest to a liberal master will be injurious to an unjust one. Thus, where gentleness and liberality fail, it is no use adopting their opposite which only worsen the disease. Love is the only key to open the floodgates of affection, for hidden even in the worst of us is He who is in the hearts of all beings. (Chap. XVIII — 61) Materialism and its prop, Science declare that want of food and the hostility of the races check the growth of living beings. This may hold good in the plant and animal kingdoms, but not necessarily with man, where he behaves like human beings. As an animal, even now, his pre-occupation is to give range to famine, to fear and to the sway of the bomb. But considered as a human spiritual being, his numbers can only be limited by his courage and his love, disproving the Malthusian doctrine. The law of the multiplication of the human beings is different from the law of the multiplication of the other kingdoms from which he has travelled far, as established in the comparative study. Science helps man to accumulate things, called property, riches or wealth, as means to support life. Hence, real gain or progress must lie

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in mouth-gains, i. e. lives, not in money-gains which are only means: yet, man strives hard to limit his own numbers, while straining every nerve to increase his possessions, i. e. the means at the cost of the ends. Work is inevitable for life, to retain health of body and mind, yet such work is prostituted, blindly multiplying the means, at the cost of life, thus perverting the purpose of existence. Man is under delusion, not only as regards his divine origin, but as regards his means — his possessions. "Riches" is a relative term, implying its opposite, poor, and it works like electricity, acting only through inequality or the negation of itself. The force and power of your wealth depends wholly upon your neighbour lacking it, who, thus, must be kept poor in order that your possessions can have the power to enslave him. If your neighbour had enough means, your wealth, in excess of your own needs, becomes useless to you, since no one needs it. Thus, the art of getting rich, necessarily becomes, the art of keeping your neighbour poor. What is desired under the name of riches is the desire to keep all others poor, for only on the poverty of others can your wealth exercise any power. Inequality is the basis on which riches can work — the utter negation of the Yoga doctrine, based on perfect equality. To be valuable means to avail towards life. A woman is bedecked with invaluable jewels: are they property belonging to the woman? In a ship-wreck was found the body of a pirate, about whom was a belt with a heavy load of gold, all found at the bottom of the sea. As he was sinking to his doom, did he possess the gold, or did the gold possess him? Possession lies in the suitableness of the thing possessed, and in the vital power of the possessor to use it to support life. There are things we "need" and things we "wish for". Most demands are romantic, founded on visions, hopes, and affections, but not need. With most of us, the regulation of the purse is only the regulation of the heart and the imagination, which if carried out will so reduce our needs, that the rest of the world will scarcely feel any want. (*Ruskin*).

Sri Ramakrishna, the divinely inspired Master, is famous for his apt illustrations, stories and parables to bring

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home the moral of his teachings. Here are some which will interest the reader, and induce him to seek the vast ocean of Knowledge (Vidya Sagar) from the sayings of this Avatar Purusha. Truth is the speech of his inward purity. **Man and World.** World is water and man's mind is milk. Water and milk easily mix up, but the milk thus diluted becomes impure: it will not set into curd or yield butter. The unprepared and immature mind, coming into contact with the sense-word, gets easily corrupted. Hence, to keep the mind aloof and calm, constantly allow it to set into curd, which it will, only if left undisturbed for a time: then, when the curd has set, churn well, and obtain the butter from the curd. The mind having become butter, will freely float in water—the world—unaffected, by world contacts. *This is Yoga in life.* The Yoga-yukth lives in the world, like water on the lotus leaf (V—10). Without this yoga-poise, sense-struck, the sodden life begins, and earns new deceits. Dealing with the world is like handling the jack fruit; one has to oil one's palms before handling the fruit. Our mind, which gets entangled with Samsara and the world, becomes an iron needle, but full of rust, and God the magnet, cannot magnetise the rusty needle, nor attract it to Himself. Book-knowledge only deepens the attachment to the world, and like vultures, though soaring high in the sky, we have our eyes and thought fixed only on the rotten carrion on the earth below. The world is a field of action, and through action one acquires knowledge. To deny God is Avidya or Ignorance: to know Him is to have Vidya or Knowledge.

Man and God can be compared to the two needles in a hand weighing scales. The upper small needle, that is fixed and unmoving, is God: the lower one, long and moving, is the mind. The meeting of the two needles—of God and our mind is Yoga—externally denoted by the perfect balance and complete equanimity. But when the scale is tipped by some object, balance is disturbed, and the mind, the lower needle, flies away from God, (the upper fixed needle). To restore the mind again in its absorbtion of God, the worldly contacts that upset the equilibrium of the scales must be removed: yet, this giving up of the world need not be obsoute. There

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is no interdiction to one's doing his duty to his family and friends, but one must know in his heart of hearts that they do not belong to him. There is nothing wrong in loving one's kith and kin, but, thereby, to become indifferent and even inimical to the rest of the world is a grievous error. The Yogi is like the bee that lights only on flowers to sip the honey, but the sense-struck men are like the common fly that alights, now on sugar-candy, then on sore and again on filth. To the enlightened yogi, his waking-state experiences are no more real than the dream state experiences. Once a god—conscious devotee, had an only son, and even this son died suddenly. His wife and relations were weeping bitterly, while he himself stood calm and serene. His people reproached him for such "heartless behaviour" and he answered them thus :—"Last night, I dreamt a dream that I was the king of a big country and the father of seven extremely beautifull princes who were also extremely virtuous and wise. Suddenly, I woke up. I am now wondering whether I should weep for those seven sons or this boy ?" All the world knows that the dead never return to life in the same form, however bitter and loud our cries and lamentations, and the Lord admonishes Arjuna in the opening lines of the Gita, "You grieve, where no grieve should be. The wise mourn not for those that live, nor those that die." (II—11). That the world is an illusion, forms the highest Vedantic belief but is common talk in the mouth of all and sundry in our land : but no one has the right to take the worldly experiences as unreal, so long as there is the awareness of the "I", the ego in him. The ego is like the stick that seems to divide the water into two parts, and such division is real as long as the ego rules us.

The Tamasic among us, instead of sacrificing their ego, kill other lives, and offer same as sacrifice to the deities, in expectation of being rewarded with what they desire, for such bloody and cruel deeds. But, "Can one wash his spirit clean by blood, or gladden Gods, being good, or, bribe them, being evil, with blood ?. The slayer spoils and wastes, hindering life upon its upward way, depriving it of that which all can easily take away but none can give—life, which

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all creatures, even the meanest, love and strive to keep, in the house in which it has come to dwell by painful pasts, whose windows give it light—the little light—whereby it seeks to know, if dawn will break and wither winds the better way." (*Light of Asia*). The present times have vastly increased overy one's stomach worries. Under the pressure of duties imposed by his worldliness, man does many unrighteous things, but from the enlightened, all duties, all good and evil, drop off like the flowers when the fruit appears. God alone counts: nothing remains, if God is denied. The number multiplies its value, if ciphers are added after the figure, 1, but, the zeros add nothing, having no value, if the "1" is not before them. God is like the sugar hill, and we are like ants before it. One grain fills our mouth, which was the experience of Arjuna who became unable to bear with the Cosmic Vision (chapter XI) which revealed the Truth that the Supreme has infinite faces and infinite Forms. God is the container of the world and also what is contained in it. Man who loves not humanity—the visible God whom he has seen, how shall he love God whom he has not seen? Only the force of Charity can quieten our will, making us wish for what we have, and thirst for nothing more. But miserable man, seldom desires anything, unless it belongs to another. Jealousy is the curse of the human race.

Achar is better than prachar: example is better than precept. Ethical or moral education consists in strengthening certain desires and weakening others. It is far better any-day to be educated, even if unemployed, than to remain uneducated as well as unemplyed. In any condition of life, knowledge acquired, besides being of practical assistance, becomes a factor in ones personal joy and happiness. Whatever strikes at self-help is evil. The beginning of health is to know the disease. Good-conduct is to the Soul, what health is to the body. Injustice corrupts the Soul as ill-health does the body. The consolation derived from scholarship and good taste is as vivid and as satisfying as those derived from the so called sense-pleasures. The selfish and irresponsible use of money, especially in catering to the irrational wastefulness of luxury and show, not only creates

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social bitterness, but condemns the victim to slave for ever. It is woman who creates the need for gold and possessions, and in this pursuit, man loses his freedom, peace and joy. In a temple at Jaipur, the priests were all celibates and had fiery natures, untamed and aggressive. They cared not for the king, neither would they seek him for any favour. To bend them to his will, the king was advised to get them married, which done, it then became the king's turn to refuse to see them or allow any of their petitions with which these priests, now turned householders, pestered him. Such is the power of Samsara in enchaining man to the world. Where God is, there desire is not: where desire is, there God cannot be. What grief springs of itself and springs not of desire? Love becomes vaster, if freed from the toils of sense. There is no deceit like sense: fair love doth not feed on fleeting sense. The caged bird often shuns its open door. The Nirguna and Suguna aspects of God are like the formless water, and ice which is the same water with form. Brahman is the still ocean and Sakthi (Prakriti or Nature), the wave in it.

In the worldly plane, good and evil must have a place. Fire serves us with its warmth but burns us if contacted. It is thus with both good and evil. So are all things in this world of duality. The flesh of the mango, its nut and skin, all go to make the mango. We use the fleshy part, throwing away the nut and skin: yet without the nut, there can be no mango, while without the protecting skin, the mango cannot become ripe. Good and evil, when they associate, result in the death of one of them. Salt, embracing milk, is death to the milk, though no cure to the salt. Fire embracing impure gold is death to the impurity, leaving the gold pure. "Acts only make joy and woe. Sorrow is shadow to life, not to be laid aside, until one lays living aside. That which bringeth the sweet white milk to the mother's breasts, gives the white drops too wherewith the young snake stings. Sweet is fond love, but funeral flames must kiss the breasts which pillow, and the lips which cling. Beauteous is the world, but all its living broods plot mutual slaughter, each hungering itself to live." (*Light of Asia*). The cat handles

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the mouse in one way, and its own kitten in another way, though both are held by the cat in its mouth—the former with hatred and the latter with love: hence, it is death to the mouse and life to the kitten. We get an indication of God by looking at His wonderful creations. Think of the marvel which makes it possible for the aquatic animals to live under water in the cold regions. Against the normal law of Physics, that heat expands bodies and cold contracts them, water at 4 degrees centigrade, becoming an exception to the rule, begins to expand in volume, instead of contracting, with further reduction in temperature. Ice thus formed, becomes lighter than water, bulk for bulk, floats in the sea, preventing the further formation of ice in the depths below, but for which all the aquatic animals in the cold regions would perish. **The command of Mercy is clearly discernible in the violation of the Physical law in favour of life.** Liquid Helium, at very low temperatures, flows up-hill, instead of flowing down, as usual with liquids. Why is this for, Science has no knowledge yet. A parasite gets inside the shell of an Oyster and causes irritation. The Oyster throws a sort of enamelling round the foreign body, and thus the pearl is made. Our body is just the external crust of the mind, like the Oyster forming its shell, by taking up matter from outside and manufacturing the shell. So too our internal finer forces draw gross matter from the great store of Nature and form the body.

Swabhava. The world is like a hog-plum, only stone and skin: yet man will not give it up. The worm that grows in filth, thrives only there: it dies, if put into a pot of milk. If a pea falls into a heap of dung, it germinates into a pea-plant—the dung cannot change the nature of the pea. The camel loves to eat thorny bush for food. The more it eats, the more the blood gushes out of its mouth: still, it will not give up eating the thorn. So does man, in ignorance, hold like a leech, to Samsara, with all its troubles and turmoils. Swabhava is in the constitution of the being and cannot be altered by external pressure: the change must grow from within the being. Prayer, meditation and love of God alone can effect the cure. Man finds the highest

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joy in contemplating the beautiful, because that suggests to him the presence of That which indeed is within the beauty and is the cause of the beauty. There is nothing ugly in creation, except when you detach the Divine from the thing, it begins to look ugly. Every violation of the truth is a sort of suicide in the liar, but is also a stab at the health of the society. The heart and Soul of all men being one, this bitterness of "his and mine" should cease. The fact that I am, I exist here, certainly shows me, that the Soul had need of me here. To imagine, my being here, as impertinence, is to accuse the Soul of not knowing Its own needs. I will not meanly decline the opportunity, in ignorance, by self-immolation. Animal exhilaration, such as wine, woman and gambling etc., are mechanical substitutes, being spurious modes of attaining the true felicity and freedom of the intellect. These animal intoxicants lead to animal pleasures and indulgences, where dissipation and deterioration set in. In a way, they aid man to pass out of the custody in the body, but the spirit cannot be commanded by opium and wine, which lead only to some counterfeit excitement.

Man Vs. The Other Kingdoms—Plants and Animals. The immature mind is unable to distinguish between the essential and the non-essential. Like the pride of the fop who sets more store on his new head-dress than on his head, modern man forgets his spiritual nature, and goes hysterical about his materialistic achievements. To the Scientist, diamond is only carbon, and the rose a mere botanical fact, and this has killed all touch of life and reality from the world, by eliminating both humanity and personality from man. *How and why is man different from the Plant and Animal kingdoms?* Knowledge alone does not make man fully and truly himself: he feels his personality much more intensely than the plant and the animal. **In every thing—plant, animal or man—there is a dualism:** each has an individual life separate from its surroundings. Each struggles to preserve this individualism, distinct from anything else in the world, yet each is a part of the universe, with which it has its intimate relationship. This disjointing negative aspect of separateness or individua-

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lity, and the positive aspect of unity with all creation, lead, not to a dualism of hostility—if it were so, the individual, not being a match for the whole world, would perish—but to a relationship of co-operation and co-existence. The more the perfection and harmony of this co-operation with the world, the more complete becomes the individual life and its existence.

In the Plant, we see its relationships, with the sun, the soil and the seasons become potent factors for its survival and success in life, and without maintaining this perfect unity with its world, it cannot preserve its separate individuality. The plant fixed and rooted to one spot, finds its food fully supplied in the soil and in the air around, while the sun aids it to assimilate such food, to attain its full stature in life. The separation from its progeny ends in complete detachment, and there is no further contact with its race. In plants, Tamas is at its full, though Rajas struggles to come to the surface, with its power of life and with its capacity for nervous reactions; pain and pleasure have their play as Shri Bose had demonstrated. Plants have the most rudimentary mind and the most rudimentary consciousness and personality. Their instinctive reach for the sun, and the indomitable search of their roots for nutriment from the soil, reveal their possession of some intelligence. Sattva practically has no play in Plant life.

In the animal world, the dualism is much more pronounced, and on that account, their relationships with the world are more enlarged. Their food is more fully separated from them than that of the plants. Through pain and pleasure, the animal has to seek its food, and because of this, it possesses more knowledge and more feelings. There is the separation of the sex in animals, and such separation involves the consequent active effort after unity, resulting in the heightening of the consciousness of the self in animals, making their personality richer. As in plants, hunger, thirst and other physical needs bring the animal into close touch with Nature and the world; yet the animal is very nearly bound within the limits of its necessities — self-preservation and the preservation of its race. Most

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of its resources are expended in the mere endeavour to live. It has knowledge, i. e. instinct, which it employs for useful purposes of its life. It knows its surroundings, its food and also has some knowledge of the seasons. The altruism that is exhibited by the animal-world is the altruism of the herd and the hive and of parenthood and no more. In the matter of giving expression to feelings, usefulness becomes the limit with animals. The separation from their progeny ends, not in complete detachment as in plants, but leads to a further relationship — the after-care of their young, whose intensity and duration get pronounced as we approach the higher orders among the animals. The sphere of the animal's activity and contact with the world enlarges, widening its consciousness and individuality, leading to a complex relationship. Tamas is strong, but Rajas prevails much more, developing desire, motion and action. There is a mechanical sense of ego, a crude memory and strong instinct, but because intelligence is under-developed, no responsibility can be attached to the animal for its actions. Animals kill mechanically, instinctively, just as fire burns and the sun gives light. It is their nature, their Swabhava. Where an animal behaves otherwise, such behaviour must be the consequence of fear, indolence or satiety. Determinism of Nature is supreme in plants and animals, and there is nothing of Free Will. In the animal, the only mental conflict is between what is and what is desired, for desire is the basis of beastly life.

In man also, we see this dualism, but far more extended and intensified. His physical needs are very much more and varied, and consequently, demand larger fields for search to satisfy them. His relationships with the world become much more complex, needing deeper knowledge of things, and his developed mind is well fitted for this task. His motions and actions are not sterotyped, as the automatic movements and instinctive activities of the animals and plants. His pronounced individuality should lead to the maintenance of a perfect unity with the universe, with regard to his physical needs; while his mental needs, for which there is no counterpart in the animal and plant king-

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doms, demand an even more exacting conformity to Nature, where the heterogeneity of things compel him to seek one unifying principle to simplify his experiences of the world. Even more vital than the physical and mental planes, man has to cultivate a region, where he has his cravings for feelings, sentiments and love in which there is no room for the expedient and the useful. The dualism that is dogging all creation in their physical lives, overtakes man in his mental life also. **The mind of man has its own dualism** — the negative aspect of separateness and the positive aspect of unity, achieved through a more perfect relationship of knowledge. His mental relationship to the world, though discounted by Science, is more vital to him, than the relations brought on for the satisfaction of his food and sex needs, which are only means and not ends. *This world of man is his mind precipitated.* It is not an arbitrary world, the outcome of chance. This world is individual, yet universal. Each one's world is his — the product of his own mind: yet, it is not wholly unlike the the world of anyone else, because its base is in the universal Infinite Mind. My mind is the centre of my world. It is not only a mirror, but is an instrument of creation; since, seeing worldly phenomena in different foci of time and space, it creates individual differences in values in the world, and subjects things to change their properties owing to differing mental attitudes. Objects that are pleasurable at one time become painful and vice versa. Such facts as those of a mathematical prodigy, a fire-walker, a Hatha Yogi who can forego air for several days, seem super-human, because the mental attitude under the influence of which these feats become possible, has not been experienced by us. There is one mind common to all individual men, and this universal mind is the only and sovereign agent which gives worth to particular man and things.

Man-form is the most suitable abode of the Divine. Animal bodies are meant only for enjoyment and suffering, but man is created after the image of God, with potentialities to realise the Divinity in him. In herbs, trees and the lower animals, only sap or Rasa is found — not blood — with consciousness in a rudimentary stage. Thought is not deve-

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loped, and hence no language or speech also. But man by his speech can communicate and record his thoughts. The only knowledge passed by the lower animals lies in their hunger, thirst and desire to propagate, and their experience is limited according to the measure of their intelligence (i. e. instinct). Whatever man attains, he desires to go beyond it. This urge to soar higher and higher must be diverted towards gaining liberation, else will lead him to his enslavement. To overstep hunger and thirst, pain and illusions, old age and death, to be free from all these is the genuine desire of all beings — yet, how blind their pursuit? In man, the mental conflict does not stop, as in animals, with what is or what is desired: there is a duel going on between what is desired and what ought to be desired. Desire dwells in the heart of all Nature-life, and this is shared by man along with the animals; but man's true life lies in the region of what should be desired, leading to a conflict within himself. His personality, conscience or character influences the results of this conflict, always guiding man away from the life of desire, towards a life of purpose. Such a purposeful life is the life of the moral man, as opposed to the animal instincts in him — his free Soul and free Will having play. Man feels a sense of responsibility for all his acts. His intelligence (Buddhi) is full in the light of Sattva, and does not allow man to plead that he acted according to his desires, because all his actions must be referred to his vastly developed intelligence. And if he acts blindly according to his impulses and passions, he is no longer human, and the law of his being, the Swabhava of man has not been rightly worked out by him. **Desire is an obstacle**, an evil which hinders man from establishing a perfect relationship with the moral world.

In the physical world, with the help of Science, man is turning the forces of matter **from tyranny into obedience**: but in the moral world, he has yet to train his own desires and passions, similarly from tyranny into obedience. What the intellect has made him achieve in the world of Nature, his Will must help him to accomplish in the moral world. The more our will is freed, and widened, the more true and varied our moral relationship with the world becomes. Externally,

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the Will is free, when we free our actions from the guidance of pleasure and pain (*i. e. desire*) while internally, its freedom is secured, when we are freed from the bondage of self-interest, self-love and self-desire, i. e. egoism. Under these **two conditions of desireless action and ego-less life,** our will discovers the world of universal Reason and the world of humanity, with love and compassion for all livingkind. Love is the flood that bursts the floodgate of nature-life which is the great divide between the finite and the infinite. Love is the harmony realised in wills which are free, since will has its response only in the world of freedom, and not in the world of law, where man is enslaved. The world of Nature, which is the field of Science, is a world of law : and **law only binds and enslaves** whereas **love surrenders and leads to freedom** of man. It is true we feel pleasure when our physical wants are satisfied but being the fulfilment of a necessity, such pleasure is only negative, releasing us from such wants, just for the moment. Love demands freedom of will on both the sides, hence in the Bakthi cult of the Vaishnavas, God waits (tests) till the Baktha's will is perfectly free and in harmony with His own. The Divine in man feels its strength in the tears of self-suffering. Like the baby's cry which would be dumb, if it had no faith in the mother, the sufferings drive man with his prayers to knock at the gates of the Infinite — a sure sign of man's deepest instinct and super-reasoning faith in the Reality presiding within his heart. Man's freedom of will comes only with his willingness for self-surrender, while God's love acts through the medium of this self-surrender, i. e. freedom. Love is the force of spiritual unity. Beneath all the transitory physical forms, there is an internal chain of relationship, like sentences in a book, where each sentence has a relation to the story, establishing a harmony between the mind of the author and the mind of the reader. Every plant, every animal in its growth teaches the unity of cause and the variety of appearance. The same character is recognised throughout the varied changes of the external appearance, yet it is the inner spirit, not the external fact, that is identical. The eternity of man is established by the identity of his thoughts: what Arjuna felt that we feel, and for our thoughts Time is

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no more. The transmigration of the Spirit from amoeba to man proclaims the unity of all livingkind. In man remains the vestige of his transmigration through the lower kingdoms whose members have contrived to get a footing and to have the prints of their features and forms in some one or other of man's organism. To the saint all things are friendly and sacred, all events profitable, all days holy and all life divine.

In our physical existence, there is the separation and unity, between our individual life and the world of things, related through common origin and mutual needs. In the mental life, this relationship takes a deeper hue, again with a separation and continual re-union, between our individual mind and the universal Mind through Reason. Higher still, there is the separation and also combination, between our individual will and the universal will wrought by love, thereby leading to **the everlasting parting and the meeting of the Self in us with the universal Self in Infinity.** Life is the relationship of That Supreme self and This Individual self. For all creatures of the lower kingdoms, Nature is final: to live, to propagate and to die is their aim. Their desires do not shame them, nor their greed or cruelty, since these aid them to attain their object. Man denies Nature's finality: he does not believe in the embryonic life of the world, as the ultimate truth. His spirit instinctively feels that this world is not his permanent abode, even as the womb, from which he came into it, was not the place for the growing feotus that he was. In pecking through the walls of its little shell-world in the egg, the chick proclaims, that life refuses to accept the limitations of Nature. The chick feels an irresistible impulse, that there is something beyond its dear prison of shell waiting to afford it the fulfilment of its destiny. The child in the mother's womb, even though all its wants are supplied, feels such relationship to be impermanent—for its greatest want, that of freedom remains unfulfilled, and so it is born into another world. This world promised better scope for the development of its personality and individuality, completely denied in the mother's womb. Here again, the law of separation and unity operates as everywhere else in life. The child's separation from the womb is attended with

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danger and pain, that it looks at the moment as ingratitude on the part of the offspring to strike at that which so long has borne it and fed it. But this severance is not one of ending the relationship; it is a compulsion of Nature that the mother and child separate, each to attain its individual freedom—otherwise death to both. The freed mother and child get united in a bond of love — a freedom of relationship, where, before birth, there was restraint and envelopment. In like manner, man is to be born from this world of Nature into the world of Spirit, where his freedom becomes perfect, not in spacial extension achieved through conquest of outer space to which science has helped him—but in the intensity of its love, evolved through unity with all creation. Like the truth of the womb, where the child was norrowly self-contained in its loneliness, this Nature-world into which we are born, with its laws of matter and force, arrests our development, not allowing us to ripen into our real Self, but making us self-centered and heartless. This Nature-self in us, through its contraction in self-desire, must transform and expand into the self of love, when man can take greater joy in others than in himself, making him shun pleasures and accept pain and even death. Man then comes to know what it is to renounce this life of plenty, and through privation, seek blessedness. Science has ably aided man's rebellion of freedom against Nature's rule, to free himself from the tyranny of matter, and his slavery to forces, in his efforts to secure the primary necessaries of life, without completely engrossing himself in such pursuits alone. To live well must be as easy to man as to breathe, only then he can free himself from the bondage of matter to follow his Spirit. But even without conquering Nature in the way that Science is accomplishing, man has defied matter, disdaining the fear of death and pain with which Nature exacts servitude from him. Man could go on without food, water and even air for long times. The fact of the great oppression of matter has led man to see evil in this world which has come to be held as a snare and delusion, in his zeal to prove his sufficiency in himself. This is pessimism carried to an excess which like all extremes is only a partial truth. (*Tagore*)

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The present world crisis in the United Nations Organisation, whose awful shadows cover the whole world like a pall, emphatically denies man's design and disposition to use Science as his friend, and the following study of **Nationalism and Science**, drawn from the writings of Maharishi Tagore whose birth centenary we are celebrating now, sadly confirms the same. The great stride which science has taken in its conquest over Nature has placed much power and material wealth in the hands of the Nation, primarily formed as an economic and political union of peoples, solely for their self-preservation. Trading upon the greed and fear of man - qualities natural to him in common with the beast— power became the ruling force in society, whose living bonds have been broken up, giving place to a mechanical organisation for producing wealth. But as greed of wealth and power can never have a limit, the Nation becomes least human and least spiritual, with the lust of conquest and conflict at its roots. Social co-operation is driven away by social competition, breeding suspicion, jealousy and hatred. Power has its victims and it spends itself in the exploitation of others: yet, power which has made its career easy without check will soon crash - for the path of ease becomes the path of doom. In a powerful state, men have only the slightest liberty to make their own adjustments, and soon they become too weak to put up any resistence, due to the narrowness of their abridged freedom. **The stupendous pressure of materialism upon the living human is what the modern world is groaning from.** Each Nation is under the delusion that it is free, voluntarily submitting to the trimming of their minds and clipping of their freedom by the State which regimented their thoughts, manufactured their feelings, welding them into one uniform mass of unthinking matter. People cheerfully accept this slavery, and become proud of the same because of their nervous desire to turn into machines of power to rival other nations in the sure faith of mutual menace. Fear is the parent of all that is base in man, and powerful Nationalism only breeds terror and suspicion. Each new Nation born - *Witness Belgian Congo* - is a new peril to all the others, and a Nation is the creation

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of power (Science) and selfishness, to pit one machine against another in an endless bull fight of politics.

Will these machines called Nations, at least for mutual protection, come to an agreement? Compromise of self-interest is impossible, more so when based upon a conspiracy of fear, while a conscienceless Godless reconciliation must inevitably end sooner in its repudiation. But what of those, if any, who have not organised themselves into a nation of power? Science bluntly decrees, they shall die, they are unfit. But the Spirit replies they shall live if they have loved and worshiped, have thought deeply and worked with meekness, because man's world is a moral world where spirit, not matter, that will triumph ultimately. The moral nature of man cannot be cut up, though it is in him suppressed while he acts like a machine. Men of all countries in the past have been simple and natural, with passions and desires, sometimes violent, trying to reconcile the conflict between the flesh and the spirit. Then, came **the age of Intellect and of Science**. having no wishes, no feelings, no love and no pity for human limitations. It has brought about the mastery of the elements of Nature which it has forced to serve some needs of man, thereby conferring on him the benefits of a greater range of time and space, but repressing the moral life in him. Mental and material power out grows moral strength, ending in a terrible imbalance, like the exaggerated giraffee, whose head, suddenly shooting up miles away from his body, renders nourishment too late in reaching his stomach and he dies, his heart suffering from want of blood supply. The enormity of his material success has lured man towards self-congratulations, in utter ignorance of the fact, that all his vaunted possessions have their eternal love only for the dust. Taking away man from his moral moorings is like turning a living tree into a log, fit only for burning, never more to bear flower or fruit. The soldier in the army—the whole Nation is turned soldier—is disciplined to break up the wholesomeness of humanity so as to be ready to butcher human beings, whom he does not know or has not hated. His will becomes dead, his thoughts numb, his movements automatic, and he is easily made brutal and mechanical. Is then humanity really advancing

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on the right path, led by Science? This is a self-delusion arising from the fact that man is served with the necessaries of life in greater abundance(?), and his physical ills are alleviated with more efficacy. But such advantages spring not from any higher nature of man, which gets weakened in proportion as his material power got strengthened. Reduced to the status of a machine, man allows his State to take donkey rides upon his back, and worships it, to boot. Man must protest against the tyranny of matter, which is uprooting his true nature, turning human beings into commodities, and life into compartments, destroying his trust in God, and in the truth of the human Soul. **Materialism has produced the most dangerous form of slavery** because masked and vended as freedom; man cannot cast off like old clothes, his spiritual heritage, his love of simplicity, his ancient philosophy and his worship. In olden days of peace and goodwill, there was established between the various nations a living communication of hearts, the deepest bond of love, uniting men for the supreme ends of life and the deepest needs of humanity. None stood in fear of each other. But the modern sapping of ethical ideals by State-materialism – the product of Science – causes the cynical distrust of all that is sacred to human nature.

The spiritual nature of man is still lurking in India, but has to face a full broadside action from **the Soulless creed of State-materialism**. To day the challenge to free society is total, thorough and powerful. The moral and social solidarity of man is the only escape to avoid the doom of extinguishing ourselves by our bombs. The huge expenditure on drinks, tranquilisers and escapist amusements is no evidence of universal fun: it is a misunderstanding of the true value of happiness, and of the conditions of its pursuit, viz., Freedom. Only free men can make a society free—*not regimented crowds*. Extravagance in dress, in appendages, in costly entertainments are displays of man's vulgar power, greed and ambition, not the emblems of his love, grace or beauty. The motto of Science, "Survival of the Fittest"—proper for the jungle but not for man, means, "*help yourself and never heed what it costs to others*": but the moral law decrees that when you strike others, the blow comes back

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upon yourself. Selfishness which is moral death is the 'religion' of Science. The success of Science and Technology in abolishing distance and natural barriers, has brought the world races so close as to wonder how they will react — like water and water or petrol and fire? Fifty years ago Science swore by the theory of absolute difference among things; but now it considers all things as the evolute of one Energy, almost akin to the philosophy of Non-difference for which Advaita and Gita stand. This sense of world unity, allowed in respect of the manifested part of creation, should naturally inculcate the sense of peace and co-operation among all races and men, since others are not different from ourselves. But **Nationalism**, *nurtured by Science*, has churned up our baser passions, tampering with our minds, affecting our real divine nature and *changing the direction of our life*. Men of old were rightly ashamed of the instinct of mere material acquisition and in India, utter indifference to same was the hall-mark of wisdom and good breeding. But modern civilization, based on Science, dreams to satisfy our endless claims, instead of developing in us the power and joy to fulfil our obligations through self-sacrifice. Only those who have virtue will mind their obligations, while those who have none attend only to their claims. Civilization is not production and accumulation of things, but a way of life, an expression of humanity, a philosophy based, art of living, and a guiding moral force. Wealth, that is not welfare, carries within it the seeds of death. Multiplication of conveniences and comforts cannot manufacture peace and joy. The truth lies not in the mass of the materials, but in their universal relatedness, and in their harmonious disposition through love, else, they end in pain and suffering. To Science, man is a construction out of huge masses of protein molecules. The balance of forces in society, between man's animal passions and his humanity, which his sense of religion had hitherto maintained, is being upset by Science, through an imbalance in his material possessions which enslave him. Love your enemies, conquer hate by Love, evil by good, violence by non-violence are all commercially unprofitable and politically inconvenient—yet the Prophets of all religions had enjoined faith in them. Life has become

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a profession, a business, where there is no room for sentiments. Raising the standard of living by adding to material wealth has come to signify progress. Science offers us physical pleasures which can be possessed and realised, and that is the end of them. We take food to satisfy our hunger: so long as hunger is not satisfied, eating remains a pleasure, which however ends with our eating, i. e. possessing the food. Physical pleasures leave no margin for the unrealised; with intellectual pleasures, there is some margin, since, the more we impart, the more our intellect gains and grows. In the region of the Spirit, this margin is infinite, for we gain all by losing ourselves. In vain, man attempts to stretch the limits of material things which can never become unlimited. Till man finds some great idea which can truly claim him and his all, his existence becomes miserable, notwithstanding his vast power and possessions. Materialism denies the paradox of the infinite assuming finitude: however, those who pursue the knowledge of the finite alone cannot find the Truth. It is like trying to know a book and its author by measuring, weighing and counting its pages, analysing the composition of its ink and paper. By asserting the matter-of-fact knowledge of Truth, without the vital active personal aspect, Science has forced man to turn his blind eye on creation and thus miss the Truth.

The East and the West—this is only a division to distinguish but not to divide them. The spiritual sincerity of the East is absolute, admitting every form of Faith as divine—hence all sorts of cults and superstition abound. Considering religion as private, as an affair of each individual, the East rejects power and enjoyments, valuing instead, the calm compassion of a Buddha and the meditation of a Sage. At the cost of being sensible and happy, here and now, the East aims at producing the saint and the good man, but not the successful man of the world. The West enjoins that life must be possessed and enjoyed, and imposes a severe intellectual integrity. Its Semitic spirit with its love of power, combat and organisation, has a mind that is positivist and practical. What is expressible and seen is real, while what is inexpressible and unseen, is unreal. Their's is a concretizing nature, with religion getting organised, no

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liberty of religious thought is allowed. Virtue becomes conformity to custom, respecting public opinion and preserving appearances. Progressive social efficiency, with more easy and comfortable life, is their goal, religion giving support to social stability. The extragavances which disfigure all creeds, whether in the East or West, are always due to the inevitable degradation which priesthoods inflict upon great ideas committed to their charge.

Modern Crisis and the Gita Way. (*Based on Tolstoy*) The root cause of the present armageddon is the swift spreading scepticism regarding all spiritual values of life, owing to the growing influence of materialism, on the basis of the animal - social life of man, as opposed to the spiritual - love basis, enjoined by his divine nature which is not only neglected but is getting denied. The free - thinking critics say that religious teaching is quite inapplicable to the high stage of scientific culture, with atom bombs and ballistic missles, sputniks and space voyages. Religion does not harmonise with man's lofty industrial civilisation, add they, and argue, that the higher from of religion with its strong emphasis on giving up, rather than on making material acquisitions, demands a change in man's way of life which, if carried into practice, life itself would have to be given up, and civilisation as now understood could never go on. The law of retaliation is the only law known to the social - animal man, who firmly believes that the scales of justice are evenly held, when the law declares an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, though there has always been known to him, a higher law and nobler, based on love, which rejected the Doctrine of Retaliation, advocating Ahimsa or Non - injury and non-resistence, with their sequel, self - suffering and self - sacrifice. This divine law is deemed by modern man, as inappropriate to the conditions of life of the social man, because of his rejection of that way of life, though sometimes he is ready to sacrifice himself in the defence of his hearth and home or other personal causes. From such a stage, it is but a hair's breadth to cross over to the divine plane of life, yet, man's poor concept and narrow outlook on life become an insuperable barrier to such devout development. Social man fondly believes that only the life in the aggregate — the family and

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the nation — endures, despite its irrationality and serious contradictions, and so fails to realise that a true and rational life is possible for man, only in the measure he can participate in the real source of life, i. e. God, by working out His Will, instead of vainly opposing same by his own. In this error, Science influences the vast majority of unbelievers among the educated masses, who think that life, in accordance with the divine injunctions, is impracticable, because it does not pay in this world. This impracticability, in their opinion, arises from the fact that a complete fulfilment of the divine life meant a reversal and re-orientation of the modern way of life. To take no thought of the morrow, not to defend one-self, to practice ahimsa, truth and chastity - all these will lead to the dissolution of the social life as now carried on.

It is true that **the divine concept of life** in its perfectness is beyond the reach of social man, and therefore what is required of him is *only a sincere, voluntary striving towards such ideals*, at whatever stage he may be. The man of science mistakes the indications of an ideal for the laying down of a rule. Man cannot become perfect in this life and in this body, and the divine precepts are not like social laws, to be observed in toto or utterly rejected The parable of Sri Ramakrishna about a serpent initiated into the Sattvic way of life is worth recounting, as indicating the correct lead. In a meadow where the cow-herd boys pastured their cattle, there lived a terrible cobra which became a terror to all around. A Sadhu who passed that way, hearing of the serpent, sought it and initiated it into the sattvic way of life. The snake got rid of its violent nature and left doing harm to anybody. The cow-herd boys then began to molest it, by pelting stones at it. The snake showed no anger, and the boys getting emboldened, caught it and dashed it against the ground It moved back into its hole and there lay gasping for very life. The Guru came back and saw the plight of the cobra, which would not even accuse the boys who reduced it to that condition — so true it had become to the teaching, though it was a sad case of the letter killing the spirit of the injunction, not to resist evil with violence. The Guru scolded the snake for lacking the wit to protect itself from wicked people, itself having given up evil ways. The perfection held out in the divine

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commandments is infinte and cannot be attained here and now, but the striving towards same will definitely increase the good of mankind. Man is actuated by his animal nature in his social life, suppressing the divine in him, but in the liberation and intensification of the divine nature in him, consists man's true life, — not alone in the fulfilment of the laws of the society and the state. The more the divine inner man becomes conscious of his approach towards the unity of his personal will with that of God, the less conscious he will become of the social life which gets subdued, finally coalescing in the divine. Human life is an asymptote of divine perfection, towards which it always tends and approaches, but which can only be reached by it in infinity – i. e. on God realisation. Divine injunctions guide man, not by external rules but by an inward consciousness, enlarging towards the Absolute Ideal, a striving towards which, deflects the direction of man's life, from the animal-social to the divine plane. To lower the demands of the ideal means, not only to diminish the possibility of perfection but to make an end of the ideal itself. Man forgets that the divine nature exists in each man's inner being, otherwise, the merely animal nature can but make an animal of him — never a human being. Human life is a compound of the animal and the divine, and progress means, quickening the movement towards divine perfection, through the increase of the divine nature in man. Such transformation is brought by slow degrees, by dint of hard striving and persistent practice, till such efforts end in ease, becoming an instinctive and unconscious habit.

No man can live without **some conception of the meaning and purpose of his life,** upon which he bases his conduct, influenced by the notion he has formed of humanity as a whole. Yet, as he grows, and his experience gets enlarged, he forms new concepts, leading to a new meaning of life, with correspondingly changed activities resulting therefrom. So is the case with the society as well as the nations who are only aggregates of individuals. Just as an individual on reaching a fresh period of life—say, from childhood to manhood inevitably changes his life-conception and consequent activities, so too nations, in the face of the

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various changes that have occured, must establish a new outlook on life, from which should flow activities adapted to the new condition. The very large growth of population, the undreamt of speed attained in the intercourse between nations, the phenomenal mastery and conquest of nature, the very vast accumulation of scientific knowledge and consequent application of same in technology to ease man's search for food and shelter and comforts—these cannot allow man in the aggregate to continue to carry on life as hither-to, and humanity cannot understand life as formerly, but must supply a new meaning to the whole of human existence, for never before did men move so closely, nor brought into such intimate relationship on so many fronts, with potential means, in such plenty, to satisfy all their physical needs. *The social-national concept of life has been outlived*, and a change in the way of life has become inevitable and a necessity, being brought on in two ways – unconsciously by spiritual causes and consciously by the material changes above described. Humanity has outgrown its animal way of life, based upon man's self-centered love of himself, and he must attune himself to the universal outlook, based on his divine origin and nature, to avoid the present discords between his professions and his practices, from which has resulted a series of contradictions in his way of life, leading to the crisis that threatens to engulf him.

All men at present, exist in a continual and flagrant antagonism between their consciences and their way of life — **a contradiction** which is expressed **in their economic, political and international relations.** In the East, the spiritual outlook has been holding its sway over the material outlook hitherto, but in the West, it was otherwise, and the tyranny of matter inevitably spurred the inventions of science, which gave the West the mastery over material nature and man'sphysical life. Men of old, especially in the West, believed in the division of mankind into master and slave, and sincerely believed that the same had divine sanction. Plato and Aristotle, justified the existence of slavery and its lawfulness, because they thought that men were of different breeds. Even in our own day, the world dearly paid for the

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Hitlerite doctrine of the Superman. The East with its faith in the divine origin of all life, had applied the law of love to all alike. Whatever may be the individual inborn differences in capacity, outlook and atitude between men, all men had the same right to live and to enjoy the benefits of the world, while the dependence upon such physical and material accessories to life was reduced and confined to wants, that were primary and absolute. But the modern social man, submitting to the supremacy of matter, which the scientific outlook has forced upon him, and with his bias for self-love and self-enjoyment, aggravated by materialism, has been involuntarily taking part, in one way or the other, in oppressing the needy, himself living at the expense of the weak. This is a painful contradiction between his conscience and the facts of life. Unrelieved toil and privation absorb the whole life of the vast majority of mankind, for which the blame must be shared both by the opperssor and his victim. The victim of old believed himself to be a slave by nature, on the faith of the religious concepts of those times, when all life – activities were related or pegged to some religious notion, and so the injury of the inequity was perhaps not so very oppressive. But now, he is conscious of a new form of slavery — his enslavement to the tyranny of matter, imposed upon him by Science and Society, which keep him in privation and darkness, for like the dog, despite the river being flooded with milk, he has to lick — never can he have a mouthful of the "good things of life" he helps to make, whoever his master be, a capitalist in a democracy, or the clique-in-power in a Socialist State. **It is man's misguided material outlook that is at fault.** Forgetting the divine in him and often denying it, man's erring outlook on life has enslaved him, and whether rich or poor, all alike pay the penalty. Not socialism nor communism nor any benevolent democracy can cure man's ills, and his pursuit after happiness and peace, like the cat attempting to catch its own shadow, involves him in the torments of a Tantalus, for ever desiring but never achieving. Despite his nominal political freedom, the modern wage or salary earner is compelled to work, not for himself of his own free will and choice, but his will is broken down to carry out the will of his employer-master,

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whether the State or an entrepreneur. Any man with a sensitive conscience cannot but suffer as he lives in the midst of such contradictions and inconsistency. Either he must change his way of life or stifle his conscience: the latter course is no escape, for then, he begins to suffer from fear even more intensely, The wealthy cannot enjoy what they have filched from the poor, embittered by the stings of conscience, or else, shaken to the roots by fear.

Prior to the advent of Science and Materialism, the life concept of man had its basis on some form of religious sanction, which secured his obedience to the social laws, deemed to have divine origin. Now, we have outlived that phase of life, and also the old religious beliefs are being thrown over-board, allowing no moorings for man's conduct and outlook on life. In olden days, the state entered into the life of an individual once in a way, and in most cases, perhaps, never. All men were then brought up in the habit of obedience to the few State laws, but now, the whole life of man, from cradle to coffin, is defined by the laws of the Welfare State, which regiments the body and mind of its subjects. The all powerful octopus, run by the party clique, enacts laws, and in the majority of cases that matter, men do not have faith in the justice of such laws. Man cannot but suffer when his whole life is defind, before his birth, by State laws, which, under threat of violence to his person, he must obey. Even this contradiction in his political relations is nothing, with what confronts him in his international relations. The Western nations, aneient as well as modern, not only defended their independence by violence and slaughter, but sought to conquer and subdue weaker nations by such inhuman processes, not only for the riches of the lands but also to exploit the victims living on the soil. All nations now admit the principles of Co-existence and Panchaseelam, yet, year after year, all nations increase their military might which paralyses the sources of social and individual welfare. Men die of starvation in order to be ready to kill one another. Man's scientific triumphs, to enable him to dictate to the world from a position of strength, compel all nations, by way of precaution in order to make peace secure,

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to arm themselves to the teeth – an evidence of the utter lack of confidence, if not of concealed hostility between them. *Such pacific professions against such warlike policy is the most terrible contradiction*, drawing man to doubt the sanity of mankind. What do you believe is man's remedy for this tragic crisis? It is as insane as the cause that has brought on the malady. With terrible intensity, all modern men strive to stupify themselves with wine, opium, gambling, sports, dance and songs, treats and travels—all kinds of escapist activities and frivolous amusements, but for which more than half of mankind would find themselves in the asylum or the grave.

Notwithstanding that man has been highly socialised and civilized he suffers terribly as a result of such contradictions in his life, the escape from which lies in his assimilating the higher concepts of the divine in him, which the Gita offers, to solve and reconcile all antagonisms, thereby to remove all sufferings. Divinity which is always inherent in the life of humanity can alone meet the present need of man, by defining his future activities, for its essence lies in the faculty it affords to man, of fore-seeing the future and chalking out the path of life along which alone he must progress, to secure peace and happiness, here and hereafter. It is a devolping notion, present in a greater or lesser degree in all, giving meaning and purpose to life. **Three such conceptions of life** are well known, under which all beings can be brought —Tamas, Rajas and Sattvan, corresponding to the animal or personal life, the social life and the universal life, respectively. **In Tamas,** life lies solely in the gratification of man's personal will which is utterly self-centered. In the second plane of **Rajasic life,** man freely reacts with other men in the social set-up, living and working for the family, tribe, race and nation—his aim being to gratify the will of of the aggregate of persons, through his own aggressive and dominant will. In **the Sattvic concept of life,** man's own personality and will is subdued, while his love, overflowing the limits of his self, family, friends and the nation, reaches the very source and origin of all life, i. e. God, and through Him to all the beings in the world. We see all the three

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types of concepts of life in the world, at all times, represented by different individuals, with spiritual developments at the several levels Those like the savages, see the meaning of life only in oneself, in the complete satisfaction of one's personal desire at whatever cost to others. The motive for such existence is animal enjoyment. Such men propitiate the evil spirits in their own favour to gain their personal ends. The Rajasic in nature, who form the majority of mankind, as members of the social group, recognise life, not so much in themselves but in the aggregate of persons for whose sake they are ready to sacrifice their personal good, the motive being to seek pomp, glory and fame through the acquisition of wealth and by deeds of valour. To them, mere personal life is an insufficient aim, and life has meaning for them only when lived for the sake of the family or the nation. **The third Plane** Beings are very rare, for in this plane which is almost **a reversal of the first two types**, man's way of life and his outlook get re-oriented, imbibing the divine understanding of life. Life does not fulfil its full import either in the domestic, social or national welfare. The motive of the sattvic life is universal good through love, and since the source of such love is God, the life of the being is divinely based, and all his work in this world is aimed at carrying out the will of the divine, in which pursuit, the being is ready to sacrifice himself. He worships God through his deeds in the service of humanity as a whole. Human life is thus a consecutive transition from the personal-animal to the social life - and in both, the basis of life is self-love, differing only in degree—and then to the universal life, based on spiritual or universal love.

Men on a lower plane, encountering actions emanating from a higher plane, misjudge such phenomena, refering them to their own codes, and interpreting them from their own standpoint, and thus fail to comprehend the true meaning and significance of such actions. beause of the conflicting and contrary natures of the third and the first two planes. From the social standpoint, the actions performed from the divine plane seem inconsistent, incongruous, nay, even unjust. And this distortion gets magnified because, in the

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first two planes, meaning to all actions is based and centered in the external aspects, manifestations and results thereof, while in the third plane, all significance lies in the internal attitude,giving rise to the actions. The situation can be compared to the deaf judging the meaning and worth of the music from observing the gestures of the artist which alone the deaf are capable of watching and comprehending. We can now answer whether the Lord's command to Arjuna, to carry on the fight and complete the action according to the divine will, despite Arjun's refusal, was a violation of the principles of Ahimsa, which say, "do not kill". In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ has commanded, "Resist not evil with violence". How then to reconcile the call of the Lord to Arjuna, to champion the cause of Dharma, by resisting and destroying evil? The Lord Himself declares in IV—6, 8, "whenever there is decay of righteousness, and rise of adharma in the world, I manifest Myself to uphold the Good by the destruction of evil". In II—45, He specifically requires Arjuna to place himself beyond the sway of the Gunas and to avoid all actions in the lower nature plane governed by the baser ego-self. **The Sermon on the Mount and similar commands of the Lord in the Gita are all absolute and valid in the two lower planes of mundane life,** where actions are not in accord with the divine will for the welfare of humanity as a whole, but done in conformity with one's personal desires. The man of the world—the social man, steeped in his own self-love, cannot transgress such commands, except at the risk of violating the divine purpose, and inviting the consequent peril on all. But the advice tendered to Arjuna is altogether different and should not be judged, nor its significance construed by the social man's standards and codes of conduct. While Arjun's objections came from his personal interests and motives as a social man, the Lord in giving the call to action, made it perfectly plain, that Arjun's personal likes and dislikes had no place in the action he was made to perform, which action should and did emanate from an altogether different plane, spiringing from out of the welfare of the world, and dictated by the divine love whose essence was the higher nature within man himself. In XI—33, the Lord unmistakably

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determined the part played by Arjuna in the action; "By Me those who oppose the Dharma fall—not thee. The stroke of death is dealt them now. My instrument art thou." No blame or sin will attach to Arjuna for the deed done at the behest of the divine will. This is no incitement to violence, no violation of the command to the social man, not to injure, nor to kill—ordinances which are absolute in the two lower planes, prohibiting social man from taking the divine law into his own hands, and thereby work against the divine scheme. But to mis-apply such ordinances to the divine decree would amount to scrapping the divine will, in which death and destruction of evil are phenomena instituted by His Law, in the interest of humanity, as explained in the General Introduction. Arjuna's action does not infringe the tenets of the Sermon on the Mount or the principles of Ahimsa.

All lower forms of religion teach by rules, dogmas and creeds which are external to man, but **the Gita sets up ideals of inward purity and perfection, on the basis of the love of God and His creation.** Blessedness lives only in progress towards perfection, not on the degree of progress attained. Each individual works through an increasing progress towards reaching the ever higher and higher degree of Truth, by means of an ever increasing and widening of love, realised in the affairs of worldly life. All divine teaching enjoins that man must love and serve God, as the motive for loving and serving humanity which is only God personified. But to Science and Materialism this basis seems obscure and arbitrary; denying God, they completely discard the requirements of love and service to God as the basis for individual man's love of humanity as a whole. They forget that love of humanity based on the social concept of advantage and utility to oneself, if not impossible, cannot take such firm and deep root as it is bound to when founded upon the universal Soul and Mind of man. To love oneself is natural to everyone and no external inducement is required for the same; but such love which is self-centered, like all mundane energy, would diminish vastly with the expansion of the area of its spread. Personal love cannot be

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infinite but limited like its source, and when this is extended from the person to the family, and from family to the nation, its intensity gets attenuated with the widening of its sphere, so much, that in the case of the vast majority of mankind, it becomes ineffective even when it reaches the national level. Its further expansion is utopian, as present politics have proved. Also, nationalism, as it has developed now, is becoming the mortal enemy of internationalism. Yet, for all, love is a sentiment that has to be felt but cannot be taught, and what is more, love requires an object, much more tangible than the entity—humanity, whereas the notion of God is a current coin, and cherished and loved by the many. Love based on personal or social concepts of life, upon which materialism banks to induce in man the love for all humanity is impossible, though its necessity is unquestionable and imperative. This fact of its very necessity destroys all hope of its possibility, and hence proves its utter insufficiency. To propose love of humanity without love of God is unthinkable. **Only spiritual love on the basis of the divinity of man can serve our need in our present world crisis.**

The Gita postulates that **the object of man's love is not outside but within himself,** in the divine personality which resides in the hearts of all beings. (XVIII — 61). By loving this inner divinity which is the same in all beings, man's love of humanity is automatically secured, the moment man recognises and adores this divine in himself. (VI — 29, 30). But the personal-animal or social type of man, denying God, is left with the self-love of his own baser nature, and has no rationale to love humanity — rather has cause, as he is actually seen doing, to hate other men and other nations — since, in each individual, the ego-based animal-self, from selfish desires, is at variance with and antagonistic to all other individuals. With the purely animal man, his love is confined to the centre, i. e. himself and there is no overflow, no circle at all; with the social man, there is some over-flow of love and the growth of a circle of limited area, still with the centripetal pull towards himself as the focus of love. It is otherwise with the man of universal nature, whose love

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has no fixed centre, as in the lower orders, but has centres all-where and the circumferance nowhere, *which is how God is described by a Saint.* Science and Technology have brought mankind, all huddled together into one enclosure, and it is no longer possible or safe for it to behave like jungle beasts. If man is to keep himself and his world safe from destruction, he must allow the free growth of his divinely based love in him, by uprooting his moha for rank materialism, that has effectively barred man's recognition and acknowledgment of his divine origin and nature, and drying up the springs of his divine love. The Gita alone can save man from his inevitable doom. Social and State laws enjoin man to live contrary to his animal nature, by subjecting it to the external laws of the society and the state — *an irrational demand to which he cannot subscribe* his free and willing obedience. Hence, man's will is broken down in Socialist states to compel obedience, which is given like the unwilling animals in the circus menagerie. But the Gita in VI — 5, 6, wants man to live in accord with his divine inner higher nature, without subjecting it to his baser animal nature or other social and state laws not in accord with divine will. This naturally brings baek man to the elementary consciousness of himself, not as a being with animal instincts only, but as one divine, as God Himself, confined in an animal husk which it is his life mission to give up once for all. For this process, called God or Self-realisation, divine love, which is the essence of man's Soul is his sole guide and reliance. And this love is not something of an excrescence which man of necessity has to develop, as erroneously supposed by the Socialists, whereas in truth, man cannot help loving his fellow-beings, since God who is the higher nature in all beings, and whose essence is love would automatically engender such feeling, but for the positive obstruction put up by man's lower nature when he denies God. The Gita way of the divinity of man with the perfect equality of all beings in the Kingdom of God, can alone resolve the deadly animosities, that have been unleashed among the members of this universe.

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Science which is the product of man's lower nature has been made **the inveterate enemy of his higher nature,** There is thus no external foe to man, and the Gita apprehending such eventuality, has forewarned in VI — 5, 6, that man, through his self-control must always master his lower-nature, never allowing it to get the better of the higher, to avoid its becoming an enemy, instead of being a friend and helper. However, the prestige of Science as the source of wealth and power has brought about the denial of the divine in man—for man is doomed when deprived of his divinity — and degenerate man has come to believe that Science or what is same, his lower-nature holds the key to the mystery of life and existence. But abused science is keeping man in the grip of perpetual fear of annihilation, while man's pursuit after plenty can be likened to one's attempt to reach the ever receding horizon. The dual nature of mundane life preserves its truth through the persistent difference it maintains. The cause and effect relationship brought on through the interactions of man's lower nature with the world are susceptible of a numerical measure, and it is this measure, and its expression in numbers that make science what it is, with its standards, formulae. rules and laws. "Whatever the matter that we talk about, if we cannot measure it and express it in numbers, our knowledge of same is meagre and unsatisfactory", says Lord Kelvin, a great Scientist. Knowledge that is not capable of quantification so as to be expressible in numbers is beyond the ken of Science and hence denied by science. Knowledge of God and other most highly cherished ideals of humanity, like, Love, Justice, Truth and Beauty, all of which pertain to the higher nature of man, are beyond quantification and are very much valuable to man and his welfare than the facts which science deals with. Thus, science is inimical to the higher nature of man, *though it can and should be made the friend of man by following the Gita Way.*

What is this modern Crisis about? The concept of the Organisation Theory has always posed problems leading to opposing views and contradictory philosophies. The world, ever in two camps, now finds the cleavage so sharp and bitter, that from wordy warfare, the camps are about to

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come to blows. The cold war is preventing the hot war and in this hope lies man's respite. **What is pre-eminent, the Individual or the State? Heredity or environment?** Duality is a fundamental law and condition of the created world, and there are always two sides to a question which cause all conflicts. In the camp that considers **the individual as pre-eminent,** can be placed the Gita and generally all the world religions which advocate both the divinity and the dignity of man. Also, Aristotle and the Western democracies hold the same view. These consider Society to be the work of Nature, a growth natural to man, as arising out of his instinct of sociability and his innate organic nature. Society is not an edifice built by man for any utility it may afford, which is only a bye-prodnct. Society grows in stature and complexity as man's mental development enlarges, and only a change in human nature can alter human organisational structure. Society exists for the individual, not the individual for the society or the state. Human organisational structure is based upon the inborn differences in individual natures and capacities, and hence, each individual is born into the proper place in society which he should accept as his place as determined by his level in the organisation. **There is no natural equality at birth.** Men differ in achievements because of their differences in capacities; discrepancies arise from natural inequality which neither education nor guidance can cover up completely. The natural organ of authority is the individual (vide. the Acceptance Theory), not the State, hence, decentralisation of power is advocated. Heredity is much more important in the development of leadership than environment, and a person is born either with or without the requisite qualities for leadership, and if these traits are not already inherent, no amount of environmental push can make a good leader of him, since environment can only draw out what is potential in the individual. The divine origin of authority, devolving upon the individual is recognised; however, the Mendelian theory of mechanical heredity, applicable in the Plant and Animal kingdoms does not hold in man, as the heredity allowed under this concept pertains to the spiritual, not the physical inheritances of the individual from his past.

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The contrary view associated with the name of Plato and the modern Socialists considers society as a made-up fabric, an edifice of the human mind, serving as a co-operative device to attain human wants. The State is a similarly built-up organisation, having an utilitarian purpose, and in theory, embodies the will of all. Hence, the will of the individual is to be subordinated to the state or commonweal. Thus authority gets centralised, to flow from the central agency, leading to the Doctrine of Authoritarianism. Organisations grow out of the needs of man and society, and **all men are born equal**, having equal capacities, but differ only in achievements, arising from abuses of opportunities such as, environment, guidance and education, when these are not equal for all. If these were equalised, since all men have the same innate powers, they can be developed to the same degree in all individuals, so as to result in equal achievements also. Only the exigencies of fortune and opportunities which are man made, bring about inequalities in human beings. The State being the supreme authority, it becomes its prime duty to equalise both fortune and opportunity for all its subjects. Thus environment is declared more important than heredity, and answers for the paucity or plethora of leadership. Environment being the sole determinent in man's development, the centralisation of government and concentration of power at the top, in the hands of a few, facilitates the levelling down of excessive individual growth—the tall poppies of Mao - through effective checks and balances by the Socialist State. Not only the divinity of man but even the dignity of the individual stands abolished in this camp, since the turn of this century, holding, out and out, for science and materialism, on the basis of the denial of God and of Individualism in Man.

The reader cannot fail to notice the typical reformer's temperament in both the camps, each holding its own view with such absorbing intensity that it could see little else. No view can be literally accepted as the complete philosophy of life. Truth, while partially covering both the views – each under certain conditions – is above both. "The troubles of our proud and angry dust are from eternity, and shall not

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fail. Bear them we can, and if we can, we must". This eternal tangle in opinions arises because Society and States which are aggregates of personalities, deal with heterogeneous masses and not a homogeneous product as the premise of the second camp wrongly holds, and this wrangle can be assuaged and even eradicated, only if the Yoga Poise of the Gita upon which the success of the man of the world so much depends, is embraced by mankind. Never before have the teachings of the Gita been so relevent as now.

Below is a study of the War of Ideologies from another angle, that of **The Libertarian Western Naturalism Vs. The Absolutist Dialectical Communism.** A serious clash in ideology is resolving the whole world into two camps, and a feeling of the impending battle of Kurushetra is holding all our minds In Freedom's cause, the struggle is said to be carried on everywhere — peoples rising, not only in their own behalf, but fighting among themselves to force their ideology. *Both sides proclaim that they champion the cause of Freedom*! **What then is Freedom?** Indeed, the cause of freedom has gone out of control. The reader who has faith in the Gita, as championing the cause of man's freedom and liberation, will be more than interested in the following analysis of the two pseudo-versions of Freedom, whose fatal opposition is threatening a mortal combat between the two camps. Because the other side is strong enough to retaliate, no side dares to drop the bomb whose accumulation involves the huge waste of the resources of all, torturing mankind in a death suspense. In this context, the reader's serious attention is drawn to the most apposite description of the Undivine Nature in Chap. XVI — (7 to 20). Freedom, to be worthy, must guard the sanctity of the Individusl everywhere, but the facts of our times directly contradict this ideal. Materialism lays claim to the cause of freedom, and a third of the Two Billions of the world, live by openly identifying materialism with freedom, challenging the validity of the Teachings of the Gita. The Individual's freedom of worship, freedom of thought and speech, his freedom to pursue a calling based on his Swabhava, his ownership of the means of his subsistence and its disposal, together with such political rights as habeus corpus,

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the jury system, the secret ballot, the rule of the majority and more, the protection of the minority — all these are flouted by one side, and such denial of these cherished ideals is also called freedom, since their existenec and exercise have not only kept up but aggravated social inequality. In that camp, the will of the few in power bends the wills of the rest to a regimented way of life, Any propaganda has a hypnotic power, so that those who live with it or in it, come to believe it. Materialism is held out to be the "*Truth*" by Science and the State, and like the octopus, extends its sway, surely and swiftly,

Dimat or Dialectical Materialism reduces man to be a kind of rabot of the State — a human, reduced to the status of an animal, an ant, living in a highly disciplined ant-hill. This philosophy demands of its votary the possession of his life. All men must be of one view, and transformed into one image. Truth, the first casuality, is subverted and delivered over to falsehood. The extreme form of authoritarian dictatorship is called democracy. Liberty, justice and freedom of thought and expression which are the very core of freedom, are converted dialectically to serve the aims of the enemies of freedom. All basic concepts that have stood for human dignity are misappropriated to obtain the response of man to enslave himself. Every ideal is raped, while a brazen propaganda denounces the other camp of failure to follow the ideal. Tyranny puts on the looks of democracy, slavery of freedom, evil of good and error of Truth. Such unimaginable deception has become possible because *both the warring Technocracies are dragging humanity in the same directinn, and* **real Freedom having no champion,** mankind is simply confused, and confused thinking leads to error and stupor. The old common law admits certain natural rights of man, and some of these have no longer any validity, because of the ideological shift, brought on by the pressure of social changes. Taking the property rights, how can freedom be defined without reference to the have-nots, to whom property represents not something which they own, but something which threatens to own them ? It cannot be a natural right of man, and the State cannot be called upon to protect the same. The Diale-

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ctical man for whom the Soviet State is the High Priest, cannot be contained, unless his ideology is countered by the more powerful Truth, like that of the Gita. It cannot be met by military, economic or political action, since *the cause of true freedom is being stolen more with ideals and ideas, than with guns.* To combat the dialectical man, we have to place before humanity, the Gita ideal of the Divine Man, who is free, living in his intellectual freedom, leading his plain simple life, with lesser dependence on matter and men. Variety and diversity are Nature's law and life, each man having the liberty to seek the Truth from the level whereto his past search has brought him.

The history of Thought records man's series of efforts to relate himself to Truth (God), each effort leading to a new insight into man's nature and that of the world he lives in. (*See Gen. Int.*) The dialectical man's ideal which has successfully appealed to the Have-nots is a perversion brought on by the tyranny of matter over man's miud, through the ever growing increased struggle for existence. The Americans, despite their leadership in bombs, in technology and in politics cannot stem the advancing tide of communism, because their own ideology is not very different in essence from the Dimat brand — neither is suffused with the inner light of Truth which alone can give meaning to man's existence. President Lincoln said, "One could not pray with much confidence for God to be on one's side, but one should pray that he should be found on God's side." To relate man merely to his physical needs cannot show that freedom is your cause. The industrial man is not only the ideal of our times, but **the idea of scarcity for none, is held out** to be within our reach as a goal. The forces of Nature have been harnessed to the service of man, not that he may be freed for the nobler pursuits and purpose of his existence, but *that he must lean more and more heavily upon environmental factors,* even though they cannot account for the explosion-like transformations that have taken place in his life, and are yet to take place, before he reaches the goal.

The dialectical man admits evil and pain in the earthly life, but insists that these can be cured. To him

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God is non-existent, and to need supernatural guidance is superstition. Man can and must save himself, in fulfilling himself, not according to the divine scheme, but according to one of his own making. Bliss, beauty, love and truth are only natural cravings, like sex and hunger, seeking satisfaction. According to him, man is inherently good – the pain and evil, resulting from **human errors and failings, can be overcome through the possession of plenty and power.** Evil and its cause are external to man, arising from environmental conditions, such as ignorance and poverty. In this belief, he seeks the full support of the findings of Science. All evils could be traced to the lack of such elementary necessities as bread, shelter, clothing, sanitation and opportunities. Technology can take off from man the burdens and ills of life. Education, spread of Industry and of mock democracy will cure all earthly evil. Only in political reforms lay the hope of mankind. To meet the challenge of this Asuric deceit, war is out of the question: to do nothing will be worse, as evil gains thereby. Modern man is deeply implicated in the evil of evils—self-delusion which is corroding his very soul, his thoughts, feelings, reasoning, hopes, principles, beliefs, dreams and aspirations. Man's physical body stands as a kind of barrier between the divine and the undivine natures, and yet is intimately linked with both. The dialectical man swears only by the body – the uttermost negation of the Gita Philosophy. **The struggle against evil** is not merely a fight against poverty, ignorance and tyranny but **is a fundamental struggle in man's soul,** in his inner being, to uproot the evil nature that has taken root there. But the dialectical man pooh-poohed all inner conflicts, insisting that the real values of life are only external, that can be measured, weighed and counted. This is the trap, and like the ostrich hiding its head in the sand to escape from its enemies, stubborn foolishness does not expunge man's doom. Happiness and peace are primarily an inner state and a soul-achievement. Even the appreciation of art cannot be measured by statistics, having to do with entities and values in the realm of ideas, not confined to external manifestation: what then to talk of spiritual experiences which are even beyond the realm of ideas?

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The Industrial man has no inner life; he is a well-intentioned animal, caught in the tools of a theory of happiness that disregards realities. His inner life is a blank, full of darkness, while his outer achievements are brilliant. This is the paradox of progress. Man is caught in a mesh of desires and passions that demand outward expression, and these conflict with his own inner evaluation of what is just, good and beautiful, so that their satisfaction, more often than not, fails to yeild him the promised happiness. He is thus a creature of conflict. Things have a way of coming out just the opposite of the way he intends, beeause, he does not reckon with the Divine Will or Law which alone shapes the final results of his actions. *He dreams and longs for peace, but has to keep himself armed to the teeth.* His faith in Science is kicking back, threatening to destroy him and his world. The ancient order and rectitude have gone, and along with them all moral boundaries. Doubt has taken its roots deep in him, and its corrosive effect, as in a neurotic patient, has brought on a hiatus between what the says he will do and what he actually does. Shibboleths and slogans rise to great power, do their work of wreckage, and as suddenly pass away, and in none of them, there is the vestige of any truth. Proved truths of old are ridiculed as unscientific, because they do not base their life on externalised knowledge, as now. Modern knowledge is based upon facts, but as none can know all the facts, any body can have any opinion, canvassing just enough facts to support it and to contradict the rival opinion. **The separation of word and deed** has led to the suppression of reason, and fear has become endemic with modern man; and living in the midst of infinite opinions that cannot be the truth, an universal feeling of doom has pervaded all his thinking. The mood of hope is gone for ever, while opinion, becoming the foci of passion, rules the actions of whole races on the earth.

Engels, the co-author with Marx of **Dialectial materialism, dismissed the idea of a Creator as unworthy of Scientific consideration.** This world has come into being in course of time, through purely natural causes. Life is the result of still such other forces, evoked

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by the proper conditions of moisture and temperature, arising from the bosom of matter. Other chemical conditions becoming favourable, the living protoplasm is formed, and after millions of years, the formless protein produced the first cell with a nucleus and cell-membrane. Then came plants, animals and mammals with advancing nervous systems, and finally, *the organ attains consciousness of itself*, as in man. Science, primarily technical, and based upon objective observation, analysis, measurement and controlled experiments, has of late, extended beyond the field of its own data, into the realms of meta-physics, yeilding what is neither science nor philosophy, but a hybrid of the two—Meta-science. This mongrel infers that man is an accident, and that his character can be entirely accounted for by hereditary factors that are ultimately chemical in nature, because the genus which give rise to genetic characteristics occupy certain known positions in the chromosomes. Materially-created man cannot be free, is incapable of freedom, and being the product of law and accident, his freedom can only be an illusion.

The Libertarian and the Absolutist are two grades of the Industrial Man, each pressing towards his goal, but mutually antagonistic, their mortal conflict arising from a profound disagreement regarding the individual being, especially in his relationship to the state. **The libertarian-shoot,** treating the ideal of liberty in a practical way, leaves the individual man free to work out his destiny, with the minimum of state interference, since it posits a limitless diversity of individual character, desires and interests which it encouraged, because the same is a sequel to the diversities in the faculties inborn in man. These individual differences being natural, can only be destroyed by destroying his liberty, which is fundamental to his existence. Hence, the remedy is sought in controlling their evil effects by means of checks and balances by the State, thus building up a groundwork of freedom in terms of individual differences. This is the stand of the so called Free-west Naturalism, which, being based on the same "*facts*" as Communism will not be able to check the growth of the latter.

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The Absolutist Communist Materialism started as its point of departure, the nature of man, not as he is but as he ought to be, based upon the discovery, not of the internal unity which is Truth, but upon an external uniformity, as the solution for all soeial ills. To convert man as he is, into man as he ought to be—as determined by the opinion of the Communist High Priest—it became essential to bring every individual into agreement with the whole, through the invention of *a perfectly scientific formula of tyranny, in freedom's cause.* Outward conformity, enforced by the power of the State smothers all internal but natural inequalities. Difference of opinion, thought and aetion is heresy. Division of wills, being the most terrible social poison, is rooted out, to save the Social State. Salvation is not of the Soul which it denies, but of the body of man which it tries to make immortal with the help of Seience. Communism bases its view of man on the deepest instincts of the age of Science. Scientific ideas have been coupled with the greatest social hopes. It attacks free man on all fronts, having abolished by denial the divinity in him. The idea of the Spirit thus, outlawed, matter has been enthroned as the origin of all causes: matter is primary, while mental and other phenomena are its reflections and shadows. The thing sensuously perceptible is the only reality. Quality is only a resultant of the change of quantity. Differences in character and tendencies arise from differences in the quantity. This is **the fundamental law of materialism,** and Science is its prop. The great ideals of Truth, beauty, love, honour, sacrifice are all just illusions, on the surface of matter, thrown up from its depths. It finds the truth of its uniformity, not in God, nor in Wills but in matter only. In order to reduce man as he is into a lump of clay without a will, without thought, and with individual inequalities sterilised, a social puppet, doped to disown his divinity, exiled from the search for Truth and deprived of the faculty of discrimination, and to quicken the pace of such transformation, force has become an integral part of the faith of the Communist. The taller poppies are cut to reach down to the level of the weakest one. Communism is inevitable and succeeds where man has faith in things, not in himself or in his divinity. The Communist's devotion to his ideal is

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not in question, and he is rewarded for his faith, as assured by the Lord in VII—20 to 23. "There are those whose intellect and knowledge, perverted by their various desires, make them serve other ideals: yet, if they work with faith, it is I who give them that faith, endued with which they engage in the worship of those Forms (Ideals), and obtain what they seek. Yet, it is I who award them the same. These men of little minds, obtain the lesser blessings." These also have their end, for perversion develops its own seeds of destruction and doom, through which lies its salvation. (*Devonport*).

The dynamism which built the U. S. A. was not a belief in **Things** but in **Men**. Today the chief drive is to create more things in the belief of creating better men—if enough goods are produced and distributed, all the problems of human ills will be cured. The national dividend is being glorified into the index of National character, though by the test of personal experience of one and all, it is utterly false. American standards of living appear to be humanity's ideals of salvation, the answer to every riddle, the secret to the life Everlasting. But prosperity is useful only if it creates a climate in which the happiness of the mind and spirit can grow. Civilization will again founder, if it is built on the ideal of the abundance of things, which hitherto has invariably sapped and destroyed all groups of men and their Empires. The Americans have built the highest standard of living which they have called the pursuit of happiness. By all the indices of American life, by its literature, by its crimes, by its divorce rate, by its desperate efforts to escape the realities of this life, through a huge and shallow **Industy of Entertainment**, one can see that pursuit of happiness has not succeeded, though dazzled by the paraphernalia of outer show and the glittering thin satisfaction of unexampled intoxication of luxury which threatens to drug them and devour the rest of the world. The founders of this physically greatest world force stood for the freedom of **Individual Man** under **God** and held the right of **All** men to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. What can be thought of a relation in which every man now finds his profit and happiness in the misfortunes of his neighbour? If we have a few rich and powerful men on the pinnacle of fortune and grandeur, while the crowd grovels in want and obscurity, it is because the former prize what they enjoy **only in so far as others are destitute of it**, and because without changing their condition, they would cease to be happy the moment the people ceased to be wretched.

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The ARGUMENT (SRI GITA)

The battle of Kurushetra is about to begin. Just then, Arjuna gets unnerved and unbalanced, over-taken by "Moha" —a sentimental fondness for his kith and kin and gurus, who are opposing him, and whom he has to fight and kill, or get killed in battle. He is beset with doubts, and prefers to leave the world with its Dharma to its fate, while he himself will get into the good books of his relations, even though they are his enemies and have wronged the world. Well versed as Arjuna is in the lore of his times, he finds precedence and authority for taking refuge in inaction as an escape from the quandry, and resolves not to fight. Sankhya and Vedanta both taught, that, as action led to bondage and sin, **Sanyasa was the remedy,** to which Vedanta further gave weight by its ideal which is to attain the state of **the actionless, immutable and featureless Brahman as the highest goal.** Arjuna's egoistic stand failed to realise the dire consequences to himself and the world, of his sudden volte-face and desertion of the cause of Dharma. The Lord who is the friend and guide of man, and who has to uphold the cause of Dharma, feels bound to rescue Arjuna from his self-delusion and ignorance, as also meet the current logic of the times, which *looked down upon action as degenerating, and inferior to Sanyasa or renunciation of works.* Thus arose the necessity for the oft and untiringly repeated command to Arjuna to act and act, never to give up action—which has led some great minds to consider the Gita as the Gospel of Works. Without having any special preference of its own, the Gita only lays stress on the inevitable, for which there had been no need but for the powerful opposition from Vedanta. "Renunciation of works, far from being indispensable, is not even possible. as every one is compelled to work, helplessly driven by Nature." (III—4, 5.) "Vain is man's resolve, for Nature will compel him to carry out the Divine will. What from egoism and delusion, man refuses to do, that helplessly, he shall perform, urged by his own inborn Swabhava. (XVIII—59, 60). "Even the maintenance of the body-life becomes impossible without action. (III—8). "Nature compels obedience from all, and contending against

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Nature is in vain." (III—33). Thus, **the Gita's statement (dictum) that action is always and ever preferable to inaction (III—8) is only an averment of the Truth**—not a choice, through any preference, for which Nature never gave room.

There is no choice but to act, yet the hold of the times was such, that Arjuna does not easily get convinced, but repeatedly aaks, " which is the better way for liberation and peace,—Sanyasa with its renunciation of works, or Yoga of works with its desireless action." (III—1, 2) : (V—1) : (XVIII—1). The Gita has to contend, not only with Arjuna's ignorance, which became the cause of his delusion, but also against the prejudice of the times, since **according to Vedanta**, *liberation synchronised with the complete cessation of activities.* Advancing far beyond and above, both the Vedanta and Sankhya teachings, the Gita boldly breaks new ground, and holds out an ideal and a faith that can stand the test of reason, being more satisfying to our experinces, which Vedanta has to brush aside as illusory, very much against our scientific taste and test. Sri Gita's **Fundamental Propositions of Existence** are ;—(1) The Primacy, Indestructibilty and Eternality of the Supreme without a second, having a Triple Status—that of the Overlord—Purushottama, of Akshara—the featureless Brahman, and of Kshara—the Soul, activating Nature in creation. (ii) The destructibility, mutability and subserviency of Prakriti (Nature), as the instrument of action—the Executrix of the Divine will which is the Law or Dharma of the world, and (iii) the inevitability of action in creation, preservation and destruction. These axioms form **the KNOWLEDGE to be known,** and without this knowledge, there is ignorance, error, delusion and perversion, rendering correct action impossible. Other knowledge, including the knowledge of the Vedas and Shastras are imperfect and partial, and fail to lead the being to liberation and freedom. True Knowledge has this virtue, like the blazing fire that reduces the fuel to ashes, of purifying actions of their sin by consuming all the dross in them. There is no purifier in the world to equal Knowledge. (IV—36, 37, 38). **Knowledge is the basis for**

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all actions : It is the passport to liberation, and the ideal man of wisdom, the steadfast man of knowledge, is described in the last 18 slokas of Chapter II.

As action cannot be given up, and as all undertakings in this world are fault ridden, like the fire being enveloped by smoke, (XVIII—48), is there no means of avoiding the undesirable consequences of action that has to be done ? The Gita's rejoinder is, that *action is inevitable, being a compulsion of Nature,* but **not so the enjoyment of the fruits of acts:** hence, if the results of works are renounced, action gets absolved of its binding characteristics. (II—47). However, without desire for the fruits, there is no rationale for doing action, and the performance of desireless or impersonal acts becomes difficult, if not impossible. Hence, the Gita introduces its unique **Doctrine of Sacrifice,** which is different from the Vedic notion of sacrificial rites and ceremonies, offered to the lower deities, with the specific object of acquiring wealth, progeny, victory, power and joy for one-self and family—all of which are absolutely ego—based and selfish. These are therefore discredited and dis. carded. (II—42, 44). **Ego being the seat of desire, all ego-based action is taboo.** The Gita wants all actions, including the ordinary daily acts of life, to become sacrificial services, offered to the Supreme in His world. " Man is in bondage to works only when he does works, otherwise than for sacrifice. (III—9). Man must give up willingly, in advance, all of which misfortune or Nature (Death) will deprive **him. Sacrifice is the very law, the very basis of existense,** and what is not willingly given up, Nature exacts same by force. Desire, born of Rajas, is indomitable, all deavouring, mighty of appetite, growing on what it feeds on. Wearing countless forms, it is man's inveterate enemy, destroyer of his knowledge : it should be nipped in the bud, and is fit to be slain. (III—37 to 43). Lust, anger and greed are the triple doors of Hell which take man to his ruin, and therefore fit to be shunned. (XVI—21). They become the cause of all actions in the ego-plane, and further impose upon man, who, self-deluded, believes himself to be the actor and the enjoyer of all such actions, while in truth, " man hath no part or lot,

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in organising action, or in executing it, or in receiving the fruits thereof." (V—14),—all these being the concern of Prakriti and her instruments Man's delusion, arising from his ignorance of the fundamental Truth, must be cancelled by a knowledge of the Truth, and all actions must be mentally lifted from the plane of the ego, to a higher plane where the Divine Will directs the whole play—only then acts will shed all their dross, and binding and tainting nature. **The ideal of the Yoga Poise of Equanimity and Non-attachment is held up,** and the charaeteristies of a Yoga-yukth are described in (VI - 10 to 23). Mentally, renouncing all actions and remaining unattached, even though one should slay the yonder host, being bidden to slay, he incurs no sin, he is not bound. (XVIII-17). For a wise man, who wishes to attain to Yoga, action is said to be the means. (VI - 3). With the body, mind and intellect, the perfectly controlled Yogi, always works hard, to attain self-purification. (Atma-suddhi). (V - 11). The Supreme is the Lord and embodiment of Sacrifice: sacrifice is born of action, and the Supreme is also the Lord of Karma, and is also Knowledge Absolute. Hence, action and knowledge are correlate. All action in their entirety, culminate, in knowledge of the Divine. (IV - 32, 33). To the Yogi, the knowledge of the Self, comes automatically, in due time. (IV - 38, 39). Thus, the virtues of True knowledge, and the virtues of liberated action, with their mutual complimentary relationship leading to their perfect synthesis, have now been established.

Man is imperfect, his knowledge is imperfect, his world is imperfect, and he is incapable of perfect action—being subject to the rule of Maya (Cosmic Ignorance). To the ignorant man's rescue comes **Devotion to the Supreme, as the third ply in this triune path of liberation.** As the unfailing solvent for all man's ills and weaknesses, devotion demands only absolute faith in Him and utter self-surrender to Him. Commencing from (II—61), almost in every chapter of the Gita, the Lord holds up the path of Devotion to Him, as **the easiest and safest means for man,** to come unto Him. (III-30, 31); (IV-10); (VI-47); (VII—14, 19, 28); (VIII—14, 15); (IX—3, 11); all emphasise and insist that

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the Supreme gets endeared to man, through undivided adoration of Him alone. **The Divine Declaration of Human Rights** is contained in (IX—22). "To the blessed ones who worship Me turning nowhere-else, I secure their welfare anp good, both here and hereafter, the same being undertaken by Me, as My responsibility." God cannot be bribed, except by Faith and Love, and He accepts with full satisfaction the offer, in utter faith and love, of a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water. (IX—26). Coupling His name in whatever we do, and acting for Him, we thereby free ourselves from all bondage and ills. (IX—27). If, with purity of heart and in full faith, one turns to Him, even though he is born of the womb of sin, whether man, or woman, sprung of any caste or out-caste, he reaches the highest abode. (IX-32). Whoever does act for Me, who looks upon Me as the Supreme, who is devoted to Me, and who is unattached, he comes to Me. (IX—54, 55). The characteristics of a Devotee (Baktha) are deseribed in (IX-13 to 20). The climax of all is reached in Chapter XVIII, where the devotee is commanded, not to bother him-self with the rules and rituals of the world, in whose performance and observance he may fail, despite his best intentions and efforts, but to meditate upon the Supreme, making Him the only point and centre of his thoughts, becoming God-conscious, offering all actions to Him and looking to him as the goal and sole refuge, nay, abandoning all rules and rites, take refuge in Him alone, then **the Lord makes this promise,** "I will deliver thee from all sins and evil. Do not grieve." (XVIII-65, 66). Through devotion, true Knowledge comes, which makes one capable of liberated action. "By devotion and worship, man has knowledge of Me as the Supreme and he directly comes to Me. (XVIII-55). And by doing all actions, always lodged in Me, man attains, by *MY GRACE*, the eternal inperishable status. (XVIII—56). Liberation is thus synonymous with Self-Knowledge, through Bakthi, and in the end, it is the Grace of the Lord, deserved and earned by complete self-surrender, which works for liberation, *covering all defects, both in the works performed and in the knowledge had.* "Fixing thy full faith on Me, thou shalt, by My Grace overcome all obstacles."

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(XVIII—58). Thus, **the complete fusion and synthesis of Works, of Knowledge and of Devotion** is here perfected.

The above in brief, is the main philosophy of the Gita, whose wealth of details and the eminently practical directions, invaluable for putting the teaching into practice, reproduced in the pages that follow, must be of absorbing interest, if the same is approached and studied with the reverence that is due to this august Subject. The apparent, yet, insuperable difficulty of living in the Spirit, while yet, continuing to discharge our worldly obligations is the enigma of human action, which the Gita solves by a concentric double move—one by shifting higher, man's goal, from the inner inactivity and passivity of the Brhaman of the Vedanta, in which there is no room for personal devotion, to the supreme Purushottama who is the Lord and enjoyer of works and sacrifices — the other, is the continuation of liberated action, now denuded of all its dross and taints, done at the behest of the Divine Will and offered as sacrifice to Him in His world. **Action, thus, becomes consistent with spiritual experience.**

Finally, **the Catholicity of the Gita** deserves special notice and wider appreciation. Gita's tolerance is the hallmark of its universality. ' In whatever way men approach Me, even so do I reward them, My path do men tread in all ways." (IV — 11). "There are those whose intellect and knowledge, perverted by their various desires, make them serve other deities; whatever shape, in whatever shrine the devotees may worship with faith, it is I who give them that faith, endued with which they engage in the worship of those Forms, and obtain what they seek: yet, it is I Who award them the same. These men of little minds, obtain the lesser blessings." (VII — 20 to, 23), "Of those who worship other gods, endued with faith, they worship ME alone; though they are praying wrongly for lesser ends, which prayer reaches ME alone, since I am the receiver and enjoyer and the Lord of all prayers and sacrifices. They know not this Truth, and hence their misguided efforts, take them back to the world again. (IX — 23, 24). The study of the Gita is not excluded from anyone, for, caste or creed,

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man or woman, religion or country, sinner or saint — these become no bar to liberation. (IX-32). However, the Gita is specifically excluded only from him who has no faith and who is jealous, since, doubt and scepticism, uever get abolished, but grow, nurtured by jealously and lack of faith. In common with all Hindu Texts, the Gita utters its benediction on the reader with the declaration that, " there shall not fail blessing, victory and power, wherever the Glory of the Supreme, the Lord of Yoga, and what He taught to His disciple, the wielder of the bow, is sung." (XVIII—78). Only a wealth of personal experience can truly develop a reservoir of personal Faith.

Though a Moksh Sadhana (Means of Liberation), the Gita is fully concerned with man's existence in this world and with his struggles in this Samsara Sagara whose eddies and cross-currents confuse and confound him. Discounting Sanyasa, advocated by the Gnana Path of Sankhya-Vedanta, it upholds man's life in this Karma Bhumi, though not in the manner, modern Materialism would have it. There is nothing in its teaching that will not satisfy the logic of reason. Its Fundamental Propositions that man is Soul, that body is Its tool and that death relates to the body only, and cannot affect the imperishable eternal Soul are admitted by all great minds, being axioms, the truth of which man instinctively arrives at, as explained in the Gen. Int. That the Soul re-incarnates in new bodies — whether plant, animal or human — finds a basis in the Theory of Evolution of Science, while the Law of Karma — the inexorable law of the Conservation of Morals — can alone rationally account for the inborn in-equalities among individuals, in capacity, intellect, aptitude and temperament. Yet, those of the godless creed who deny re-birth, are also compelled to deny all disparity and difference among men *at birth*. They only beg the question when they attribute these individual differences to external factors such as environment etc., since, environment also is a factor conditioned by man's past Karma. That man has two natures – a lower, based on the Ego which he shares in common with the beasts, and another, a higher nature worked on the basis of Love and Truth, are

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verifiable facts from each one's experience. That the Supreme has a triple status with Prakriti as His subordinate executrix, which is a vital departure from the Vedanta and Sankhya, for valid reasons enumerated in the Gen. Int. and in the Text, is a logical sequel to the Doctrine of Non-difference towards which modern Science is attuning itself. The Gita and Science agree on the important fundamental that Cosmos is the emanation from the Primal Energy; but, while the Gita attributes Creation with its perfection, order and law to the Divine will, Science, despite its acknowledgement of such system and law in the Universe, for discovering which there is no end to Science's boasting, attributes same to unaccountable chance, though chance only led to chaos, never to a cosmos.

What is true happiness? what is enjoyment? what is a manly success in life?—all have been given a clear-cut answer in these pages by the Gita, while Materialism has answered same is quite the contrary way. It remains for the reader to judge with reference to his own experience and base his conduct in life. The Gita solves all life problems by a re-statement of the Spirit everywhere, while Materialism opposes same through its imposition of the over-lordship of Matter as the Prime Mover in Life and Existence. The Gita insists on rooting out desire as the cause of all misery in life, while Materialism persuades man to multiply his wants and consequent dependence on Matter, counting upon Science to aid him in their satisfaction, knowing desire to be a bottomless pit which satisfaction can never fill up. The Gita strikes at the root of the cause, rather than wait to cure the mischief, aud puts up a fence around the promontory from which people fall, but Science constructs a hospital at the base to cure the fallen victims, thus mocking at man's wisdom which insists on prevention as better than cure. Can Science lord over Nature? Science can only imitate and follow Nature and that is its limit: but Yoga which is spiritually based can conquer Nature. To talk of the conquests of Science is a case of using words wrongly, which according to Socrates accentuates the evil in us. (p. 21). The Gita is full of the ways and means to over-come and vanquish this mortal foe of man—desire. Life is a triangnlar

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relation, God being at the apex, with man and the material world at the two base-corners. Both are divine in origin, and retain their virtues so long as the link with the divine source does not get snapped. But immediately man loses his consciousness of the divine in him, the apostate man is left to himself to fight the world, now become a snare instead of being his succour. This is man's disease and Science which has caused it cannot cure it. The War of Ideologies which the policy of brinkmanship is bringing to the point of exploding, has been critically analysed to the root from three angles in three essays — all leading to the same conclusion that Science cannot mend the world but only end it, if God who is Love is divorced by man.

The term Swadharma, along with other expressions used in the Gita to denote *what ought to be done* has been given the widest scope to include all actions undertaken and done to promote the Dharma of the world as per the Divine Scheme. It has two characteristics — on the positive side, its basis is universal Love, while on the negative side, it signifies complete absence of selfishness or Egoism. Gita-Brahman is only the Akshara aspect of the Supreme, whereas He is the Absolute Supreme according to the Sankhya-Vedanta. but in these pages, Brahman is also used to denote the Supreme, which in fact He is, since there can be no difference in status among the triple aspects of the same Lord, in keeping with the Doctrine of Non-difference.

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Gita Text with Running Commentary.

Chap. II. The Sankhya Path of Gnana Yoga.

SRI GITA is an unique exposition of the philosophy of Action, Knowledge and Devotion, building a harmony of these three great means into one. To follow the Gita Way, one should have the head of a Sankara, the heart of a Buddha and the action and Yoga Poise of the philosopher King Janaka, **all in one**. The General Introduction contains the gist of Arjuna's arguments and their answers, the former covered by Chap. I. of the Gita entitled, The Yoga of Arjuna's Despondency, forming the background of the whole episode. In Chap. II. the **Sankhya Philosophy** is introduced, advocation the Sankhya Path of Knowledge, **leading to the renunciation of works** - which appeals to the intellect, the aim being to remove from man his ignorance, which is the cause of his doubts and consequent wrong-doing or deriliction of duty as in the present case with Arjuna. (11 to 30). In verses 31 to 38, an appeal is made to Arjuna's sense of duty, extolling the *Swadharma of a Kshatrya* adding the warning, that an unsought Dharma Yudh (War) was a rare noble opportunity, which, if deliberately shunned, became sinful, ending in dire consequences to all. Next, *Desireless Action or the Yoga of works* is placed before man, as a practical Ideal, incidentally drawing a contrast but not a contradiction with Vedic rites, involving action for their fruits. (39 to 53). Finally, the appeal to the strong steadfast Intellect is made by describing the characteristics of a **Sthitha Pragna**—the man of Steadfast wisdom (54 to 72). The Yoga of Knowledge is the main theme, and forms the rubric of this Chapter. **N. B.** Throughout the Book, the numbering of the Slokas has been shown in Arabic, within brackets, while Chapter numbers are in Roman numerals.

You grieve where no grief should be. The wise mourn not for those that live, nor those that die. (11) Do not doubt that either I or You or any of these ever was not, nor ever will not be. All that doth live, lives always. (12) To the body, there cometh such changes as infancy, youth and old age, so the Soul seeks change of life-abodes (body), which

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the wise know and fear not. (13) Take comfort, that this sense-life which irks thee with its qualities — heat and cold, pleasure and pain — is brief and evanescent. Bear with it with a stout heart, and you will become fit for immortality. (14) & (15). The real can never cease to be, while that which is unreal hath no existence. This is the truth about Reality: this is true discrimination. (16) That which pervades and sustains all perishable life, itself stands imperishable, indestructible. (17) Reality is deathless, is eternal, only its forms (bodies) having an end, perish. (18) It is nothing but ignorance to say that the Soul can kill or gst killed by another. Soul cannot slay nor It is ever slain. (19) The Soul has neither birth nor death. Never was time It was not. Unborn, eternal and changeless, It exists for ever. It is not killed when the body dies. (20) Slaying and getting slain are acts unrelated to the Soul which is immortal, self-existing, ancient and exhaustless. (21) The Soul casts away old bodies and takes up new abodes, just as man changes wornout raiments for new. (22) Weapons touch Him not: neither fire burn Him, nor water wet Him, nor wind dry Him- He is unharmed, permanent, invisible, ineffable, unthinkable, all pervading, firm and Formless. (23 & 24) Knowing Him thus, you grieve where you should not grieve- (25) The end of birth is death: the end of death is birth. This is ordained. (*See Gen. Int.*) Will you mourn for what befalls, being inevitable? (26, 27) Birth takes place unperceived: death overtakes unperceived. Beings remain unmanifested before birth as well as after death. They become manifest in between birth and death. What is there to grieve in this? (28) Soul is wonderful and wistful to contemplate: difficult and doubtful to speak upon, too great and starange for tongue to utter. The Soui is still a marvel, as none has understcod Its nature- (29) He is the indweller in every form and remains beyond harm. Grieve not for that which cannot suffer. (30) The **Three** most fundamental **Propositions of Existence** enumerated in this Chapter are:— (1) The Primacy, Indestructibility and Eternality of the Soul without a second (ii) The destructibility, mutability and subser-

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viency of the body, as the instrument of action - (iii) The inevitability of action whose development is taken up in the next and following chapters.

Verses 31 to 38, extol the Swadharma of a Warrior-Ruler. The Lord enjoins Arjuna to nerve his heart, and meeting pleasure and pain, gain, and loss, victory and defeat as things alike, to engage himself in the task he is called upon to perform. This brief notice of the Lord's exposition involves mighty fundamental problems of a controversial nature, such as, *What is Swadharma, What is a Dharma Yudh* (war) *? What is Varna or Caste* ? What are the four-fold divisions of society, according to Guna and Karma ? Whether Gita is not incitement to violence ? Answers to these vital problems as well as of the Sankhya Philosophy, dealt somewhat in detail in the General Introduction, will meet with the expectations of the general reader. Arjuna was more concerned with the sinful consequences of his action, and so the Lord begins the teaching of the Yoga Philosophy, according to which one can overcome the bondage and sin of wrought deeds. (39). The Lord assures that in Yoga there is no loss of effort, no hope marred, for practice, with even a little faith, saves one from great dread and fear. (40). There are two types of Intelligence — the higher and the lower, in men. The higher is concentrated, poised, homogeneous, with a single-pointed will, directed towards Reality: the lower is no unified intelligence, having no single will, but beset with an endless number of aims, moving in all directions, in pursuit of all the desires offered to it by the world. (41). The lower type, which is by far the most prevalent in human beings, has a weak will, with indefinite and inaccurate knowledge, hence intelligence is dispersed in outward life and works and their fruits. (43). The Karma kanda of the Vedas is quite inimical to the Yoga path advocated by the Gita - hence the warning, that the flowery vistas, opened up and promised by the Vedas, should not be literally taken, nor be allowed to impose upon man. (42, 44). Desire for wealth, progeny, victory, power and every kind of good fortune and joy, for oneself and family, which are absolutely egoistic, form the motives for action of the Vedavadin,

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performing the Vedic rites, sacrifices and ceremonies - the scrupulously correct performance of which is the kernal of religious life, for men dominated by the lower type of intelligence. Such rites being born of desire, the votary has to be born again and again—ad infinitum—for the enjoyment of the fruits, and the satisfaction of the desires. What is worse, all Vedic rites lay down certain interdictions, disobedience of which will lead the votary to misery and sufferings. The performance of the rites must be immaculate, true to the prescribed rules, at the same time avoiding the interdictions. This serious risk is in utter contrast to Yogic action, as per sloka 40. The Gita cannot deny the Vedas, and does not decry them either. It recognises the Vedas to guide those who are worldly, with no thought of Realisation, and who want to be subject to the rule of Nature and her three gunas, whose disequilibrium sets in motion all activities and sufferings. The Lord therefore, significantly calls upon Arjuna with the higher type of intelligence, to get over and be above the sway of the three gunas. (45). The attitude to the sacred Vedic Scriptures is adequately brought out in the simile used by the Lord in 46. To one, who aspires for Liberation, the Vedas are of so much use only, as a pool of water, in a place which is everywhere flooded. (46).

In later Chapters, the Gita speaks very highly of the Vedas as Divine scriptures, and that the Supreme has Himself extended in the Vedas, known as word Brahman. All **Shastras** generally are the laws imposed on itself, by humanity, to checkmate the purely egoistic actions of the naturally unregenerate man, so as to control his tendency to seek in the satisfaction of his desires, the standard and aim of his life. As rules designed to guide man in the conduct of his daily life, they are external compulsions, which in course of time, become dead and rigid custom, unless these rules of conduct grow and change along with the growing and changing human conscionsness through experience. They stifle life's growth, their letter killing the spirit, either they get discarded or modified. It is the spirit that saves, while the letter binds and confuses, and there is a point beyond which the utility of the Scriptures cease, because the Lord is seated in the hearts of all beings and is the true

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Knowledge, and this Truth inside of us is greater than Its words in the Scriptures. The aim of the Vedas is narrow, limited and circumscribed, subjecting life to Nature's rule and law of action, forcibly brought out in slokas 45 and 46. Yet, they are meant for those who cannot aim higher, not having known the final Truth of life and Existence. *Action is the absolute undisputed sphere of the three gunas, and inevitable for the embodied beings.* How then to act, and also be above the rule of the Gunas? The Gita answers, "Live in action: you cannot avoid it, having become your birthright. Let right deeds be thy motive, not the fruits which come from them. (47). It is impossible to avoid action, but there is no such imposition on the fruits of action, which one can enjoy or give up. Become unconcerned, indifferent to the result, and (this is not preaching indifferency to the act itself) you solve the tangle. Since fruits of action are not to be enjoyed, do not be after renunciation of works, i. e. inaction which readily suggests itself, but remember that it is not actions but their enjoyed fruits which bind the being. Equability of mind in action, untrammelled by the thought of the fruits, is Yoga. (48). The act being determined, the motive and the attitude become even more important. The mechanical nature of action is of far less consequence, in shaping the outcome, than the right thinking mind, or wisdom, governed by the Yoga poise. (49). There is nothing more wretched than acts undertaken for their fruits. All pain and pleasure, good and evil result only from the enjoyment of the fruits of actions, and Yoga, by giving up such enjoyments, gets rid of all sufferings — hence, **Yoga is skill in action, is perfection in action.** (50). If, to boot, true knowledge is also had by the being, then, he is freed from the fetters of birth and death, and reaches the abode of Bliss. (51). The intellect should not be deluded. but rise above the conflicting opinions, regarding the path of action, inaction and renunciation. (52). The steadfastnesa of the intellect, not assailed in the least, one should stand unperplexed, firm and rock-like, in the Yoga poise of equanimity: that is Peace. (53). Desireless action, (only then, one will reject the fruits thereof) is advocated by the Yoga poise of doing works, propounded above.

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At the request of Arjuna for the elucidation of the **characteristics of a Sthitha Pragjna,** *the man of steadfast intellect* (54), the answer covered in 18 slokas, is said to contain the kernal and essence of the 18 Chapters of the Gita. The Yogi of steadfast wisdom is the opposite number of the follower of the Veda. In the latter, the intellect takes a downward course with an outward orientation towards sensations, leaving the subjective being at the mercy of the objects of the senses. Life becomes one of desire, and the disturbance caused to the mind, by such external sensations, is so strong as to let the mind adrift, just as the winds carry away the ship on the stromy sea. (67). Uncontrolled emotions, passions, longings and impulsions are awakened in the mind—all of which so affect the intelligence that it loses its power of discrimination and mastery. (63). Intelligence weakened and destroyed, the being is subjected to the confused play of the gunas, leading to an eternal tangle of false, sensuous objective life, enslaved by grief and passion. Such is the life of most mortals who are unenlightened and undisciplined, and to whom the Vedic rites appeal. But, when the intellect takes an upward and inward orientation, towards the calm and immutable purity of the Soul, it is no longer subject to the distractions of external nature, but enjoys the inner subjective self-delight, independent of the objects of the world. In this, the first step is to **get rid of desires, the root cause of all evils,** while the root cause of desire itself is the rushing outward of the senses, and along with them the mind, to enjoy the worldly objects. The senses must therefore be drawn back away from their objects, as the tortoise draws its limbs into its shell at the approach of an enemy (58). This leaves the mind quiescent and the intellect calm. The Soul, under these conditions of peace, enjoys nature's actions as a witness, while the life of the being experiences neither joy nor sufferings, because, not desiring any thing. For the inner withdrawal, and for the renunciation of desires, no starvation or bodily masceration is necessary, no renunciation of the world, as per Sankhya Philosophy. Such physical starvations of the senses and bodily needs will result in removing only the physical contacts, but will not get rid of the inner mental relations

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and longings, which alone make physical contacts hurtful. Real renunciation, which comes of a well disciplined powerful mind and intellect, must make the life capable of enduring the physical sense-contacts, without suffering mentally the sensuous reactions. Using the eyes, we see a beautiful object, and if at that point, the mind detaches itself from the sense-contact, no harm results: but if it further reacts, leading to a desire of possessing the object, trouble starts. *The unsensuous use of the senses must be made possible.* and become the normal with the life of the being. **This is liberation**—but how is this practicable?

First, desire should be given up, for only desire can raise disturbances in the mind, which must be made to seek comfort and joy in the self-delight of the Soul. (55). Neither joy nor sorrow should produce any reaction; nor passion, fear or anger be allowed to crop up in the mind which should be fully absorbed in lofty contemplation of the Soul. (56). One should have no ties of blood or other kinship and must accept both evil and good as the same. (57). From the self-disciplined and self-governed being, things that solicit the senses keep off: yet, *when at times the attempt at self-control fails, devotion and meditation on the Supreme should be resorted to as the only remedy.* (59 to 61). The senses being the instruments of the mind, the latter naturally lends itself easily to the senses, and when the mind dwells upon an object of sense, with an inner longing and interest, such attraction generates desire, and the object becomes one of absorbing thought for the intellect and the will, leading the life into the danger zone of anger, arising from disappointment. (62). Hence in dealing with the objects of senses, introduce (project) neither love nor hate, to avoid all disturbances in the mind. Tranquility of mind, intellect and ego, not only heals all earthly pains, but puts an end to them. The undisciplined mind can have no steadfast and steady intellect, nor is it capable of any meditation or concentration. Without meditation, there can be no peace. and the peaceless have no happiness or bliss. (66). Whoever has complete control over his senses, restraining them from allowing the sense-objects to disturb the mind, he alone possesses steady

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wisdom. (68). Men busy themselves with the sensuous life of the world, all day, which aspect of life is a closed chapter (dark night) to the Yogi, who keeps himself shut from such indulgences. Thus, what is day to the ordinary man is night to the Yogi. Again, of Reality with which the Yogi busies himself, the ordinary man is completely in the dark. Life in the Spirit i. e. Reality is night to the unfortunate man of the world, but day to the Yogi. What is mid-night gloom to one becomes wakeful day to the enlightended. (69). What is the state of mind of a Sthitha Pragjna? His mind remains unaffected, unchanged and unmoved whatever sense-objects pour forth into it—for the windows of the mind i. e., the senses need not be forcibly shut, if the mind can remain unattached to them—like to the ocean, day by day, receiving floods, from all the rivers of the world, never overflows its boundary, remaining unswelled at its own level. (70). To attain perfect peace, one must shake off the yoke of the flesh, and the sense of the "me and mine", i. e. the sins of egoism. (71). This is the state of Brahma Nirvana, reaching which all illusion is dissolved. (72). This chapter, giving in broad outline the frame-work of the Gita Philosophy, introduces us to the cardinal and basic Truths which contain the seed of much of the teachings of the Gita—its *Doctrine of Desireless Action, the Equality of Yoga, of the Rejection of Renunciation of Works and of Devotion to the Supreme* or Bakthi—the last just hinted in sloka. (61). Nothing can be more practical than the above practicable instructions to guide our daily conduct in life.

Chapter III. Karma Yoga (Of Works.)

As per the title, the Chapter deals with the Yoga of Action. **Reconciling the opposition between Knowledge and Works,** of those times, through the matchless divice, of Desireless Action taking the place of Vedic Rites which brought about the antagonism, the Lord introduces the idea of Sacrifice as the fundamental basis of all action, including Vedic action which involved the process of mutual giving and receiving in a closed circle. Citing Himself and King Janaka

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as Karma Yogins, He dilates upon the disabilities of inaction, as also of action in a lower plane for the satisfaction of the selfish Ego, and finally dwells upon the nature of Desire and its vanquishment, throughout harping on the truth, that real renunciation is not abandoning works, but slaying the Ego. Arjuna, getting puzzled, complains that the Lord has advocated two paths, apparently contradictory, i. e. desireless works according to Yoga, and renunciation of works according to Sankhya, the two put together as part of one method. (1, 2). In the Sankhya philosophy, action is the very opposite of knowledge, since freedom or liberation synchronised with the complete cessation of the activities of the gunas, leading to an actionless state for both the Soul and Prakriti. That philosophy taught, that the intelligence of man engaged in the activities of Nature got entangled in egoism, ignorance and desire, as a consequence of which he is drawn into action. To reverse this result, and to draw back the intelligence, action itself must cease for cessation of desire and for the annulment of ignorance through Knowledge. Hence, the giving up of the householder's life and work, by resorting to Sanyasa, becomes a necessary part in the movement towards liberation. Thus arose Arjuna's suggestion to resort to sanyasa, as an escape out of the action, he did not liko to perform. This *opposition of the Sankhya path of Knowledge to Karma* arose, because, Karma only signified, Vedic actions which were offerings directed towards mutual rewards, with a desire eager for the results of works, and looking to a larger enjoyment in life. The Gita has already rejected such works in Chap. II., having as its tenet the renunciation of desire, adding the warning the sacrifices and works offered as the means of getting enjoyment here or hereafter, bind the life to ignorance and misery. True knowledge cannot be based upon the Ego-sense and its desires, and hence their extinction is a fundamental imperative to overcome ignorance. Knowledge and (Vedic) karma, so declares Saint Sankara, are mutually opposed, as light and darkness: their synthesis is impossible. In reconciling the Yoga of Desireless action — not Vedic rites — with the Yoga of Knowledge, the Gita goes far beyond and above the Sankhya philosophy, establishing at the same time, that Sanyasa or physical renunciation of

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works is neither the only way, nor at all the better way. There is no need for the cessation of the activities of the gunas, for man to attain a free serenity and equal poise. (3). Meeting the current logic of the Sankhyas, the Gita asserts, that such *renunciation of works, far from being indispensable, is not even possible,* (4) as everyone is compelled to work, helplessly driven by the gunas of Nature. (5) Embodied man cannot cease from action even for a moment His very existence in this world of Nature (Karma Bhumi) is an action. His physical life, its maintenance and continuance, cannot be effected without action External immobility cannot save man from the workings of Prakriti: action will still be taking place in the mind, and such mental activity is even more complex and dangerous, being the cause and determinant of his physical activities. Hence, to repress the effect, while retaining the cause, leads to hypocracy (Truth mocks at the desperate device of the Indian Govt. to stop the inconvenient population growth through Birth-control — a product of Science.) Sense objects are only an occasion for our bondage, the mind's insistance in having a reaction of its own on them is the cause of all action. To shut the eyes, and still think (see) with the mind, upon sense objects is false discipline. (6) Not the bodily action, nor the mental, is vital, but the mighty energy of Nature will have her play. Since inaction is impossible, controlled action of the subjective and objective organism is advocated. (7) **Inaction can never be superior to action,** and knowledge does not mean rejection of works. Action which is the function of Nature should take place at all times but be at the behest of the Soul, which, being desireless, can direct only desireless action. (8) The phrase, "Niyatham or Karthavyam Karma," used here and elsewhere has given rise to a lot of controversy as to its significance — whether Vedic rites or all obligatory actions or social duty, etc, thus whittling down the sphere of human activity. But the Gita, would put no curb on action, not involving himsa and untruth, intending the phrase to mean the Swadharma of the being. (Refer Gen. Int. re.— Swadharma).

Desire is the ordinary motive of all works, and without desire there is no rationale for action. One way of escape

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out of this, is to fix a rule of action outside ourselves. Hence, action enjoined by the Shastras, if performed impersonally, without any desire for the fruits thereof, may meet the Gita requirements. Can desireless action be possible according to Shastras? Since all actions arise out of our own nature, Swabhava, whose choice we have to obey, even external injunctions will have to conform to our inner compelling nature, so that we may be disposed to undertake such actions, thus rendering impersonal action difficult, if not impossible. Gita's solution is unique, by introducing **the Doctrine of Sacrifice** into works. By doing all works with sacrifice as the sole aim, we become desireless. Man is in bondage to works only when he does works, otherwise than for sacrifiice (9). Verses 10 to 16 bring out the necessity of sacrifice, and we are taken back to Vedic action for acquiring enjoyments through sacrifice. Though already discredited as an inferior move and discarded, yet it is mentioned by way of contrast to the higher and more austere ideal of the liberated being, (sloka 17). In this inferior Vedic action, there is the eternal interaction of Devas, Gods and men, a commerce of mutually giving up and receiving and raising each others' workings and satisfaction, in which man slowly rises towards a growing fitness for the supreme good. And in proportion as man subordinates his personal desires, he becomes satisfied with sacrifice as the law of life, instead of enjoyment of the world, and so begins to live in the spirit, rather than in his ego—a well oriented move towards the goal of his existence. Yet, the Gita's Doctrine of Sacrifice (Action) is very much more enlarged than in the Vedas, taking many forms, not all of them ritualistic. The Lord Himself is the Soul of sacrifice, and even all our ordinary daily acts of life should be sacrificial service, animated by the thought of the Supreme, with fruits thereof dedicated to Him. "The Gita is a natural reaction against an overgrowing sacradotal ritualism. Its comprehensive tolerance and simplicity, through its radical doctrine of salvation for all, by devotion to a personal God, who is also the Supreme Deity, threatened the dissolution of the traditional social order, even imperilling the Vedas".

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Many offer sacrifice to various Gods and Forms, and the means of sacrifice are also various. The saving principle in all forms of sacrifice should be to diminish the sway of desire and ego, not only in originating action, but in the free giving up of the fruits thereof, for the pleasure and benefit of the world, which is divine. *Life or existence is concomitent with work, ie., sacrifice.* All existence must be in reality a sacrifice of works, offered to the Divine in His world. Sacrifice is the very law, the very condition of life. **The law of mutual dependence is the basis of life's existence.** In this world, all must be exchange, each growing by each, and living for all. Where sacrifice is not willingly given, Nature exacts same by force, to satisfy and sustain the law of her living. It is the sign that this world is of God, not a field for the self-satisfaction of the ego in man, which always tries to receive but never gives up. Ignorant man imagines that Nature and all beings in the world, exist for his own self-satisfaction, and must obey his personal will. He fails to see that Nature is not at all concerned with even pleasing him, but obeys a higher universal will, which it seeks to satisfy. Because of this ignorance whose seal is egoism, man ignores the fundamental law of life, viz. sacrifice, and seeks to take all he can for himself, and giving up only that, which is forced out of him by Nature. Man must give up his false stand based upon his egoistic demands on the world, where his personal desires and preferences can have no consideration unless they conform to the Divine Will. He has to work as a humble unit, as one among the infinite creatures, who contribute their share of labour and effort, to a result, not determined by man himself, but by the universal action and purpose. Man wins peace and freedom, by renouncing in advance, all of which misfortune or Nature (Death) may deprive him. Nature presents to us not a categorical imperative but a choice. Do we prefer to pay our way in the world, or be parasites waging war upon all others? It is through sacrifice we multiply: it is the milch-cow — the Kama Dhenu, which yields all our desires. (10) *Enjoyment of a benefit, without a return in sacrifice, is theft.* (12) Anna (food) supports life: rain produces food and itself results from sacrifice that is born of works of the living. (14) One verily

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eats sin who labours and gathers for oneself, but, he, who partakes of the leavings in sacrifice, is freed from all sin. (13) The liberated being who, independent in spirit, has nothing to do with enjoyment or works, exists only in the calm joy of Brahman. This being has nothing to gain by action, *also nothing to gain by inaction.* (17, 18). It is not for any personal motive that he has to make his choice, between action and inaction—for the key to knowledge and liberation lies not in inaction, but in desireless action as confirmed by slokas 19 to 22 'Karyam Karma' in this sloka (19) must be taken as Swadharma as in (8).

King Janaka, a liberated Soul, a Jnani having Self-knowledge, was, at the same time, an ideal Karma Yogi. In him are embodied the whole teachings of the Gita, as an example for others to follow. It is worthy of note that Sukha—the Sanyasin—who at birth had attained to Self-knowledge, sought Janaka as his Guru, to initiate him into Brahma Gnana. (20) Men take their ideas of right and wrong, from their elders and superiors, and imitate easily others' actions. (21) The Lord who is not bound to any toil or work, yet, is engaged in action. (22) Else, ignorant beings following His lead of inaction, would neglect all work and all good (23) and perish consequently, for which the Lord would become responsible. (24) Man, whether ignorant or enlightened is weded to action. While the ignorant are impelled to act by their ego-desire, *the enlightened must toil sense-freed, to bring about world deliverence.* (25) The wise should not unsettle the mind of the ignorant who act for fruits, but serve as examples of correct action and attitude. The Savage clings to his superstition obstinately and sincerely. To shatter the same will destroy his moral moorings and social code and mental peace. No type can come into existence and live, in which God does not live. The correct way to refine crude beliefs is to alter the bias of the mind—for one's view of God, depends upon the kind of man he is, his intellect, temperament, training and environment determining the result. The defect must be cured, but not, criticised. Remember that error is only a sign of immaturity. (26). All things are everywhere wrought by Nature, by the interaction of her

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three gunas, but the foolish think that they are the actors who act. (27). But he, who has true knowledge, realises that action is the function of the qualities of nature, brought on by the play of senses upon sense-objects, exciting through the mental reaction, movement or action in the body, while the, Soul stands aloof from such acts. (28). The untaught, not knowing Nature's way, get mixed up with their actions, but those who know the truth should not confuse the ignorant on that account. (29). Discharge thy duties, heedless of the issues or results, offering them as sacrifice to Me, and with your mind contered inwardly on Me, free from egoism and profit-making, (30). They who keep My command thus, the wise and faithful hearts, are completely rid of the consequences of their acts. (31). While, the faithless who disregard My injunctions from self-conceit, lose and suffer irretrieveably. (32) Verses 30 and 31 affirm the triune path of liberation which the Gita never tires of repeating in every chapter viz. **Man must work: Man must Know: Man must adore the Supreme.**

The knowing one, following what fits him most acts in accordance with his own nature: for, Nature compels obedience from all and contending against Nature is in vain. (33). The injunction to follow one's nature is not a lieence. Neither here nor in sloka 5, is Fatalism admitted. (*Vide Gen. Int.*) Man is not a machine to be driven by Nature, rather, Nature is the machine, which Man, the master, is charged with, to guide and drive. Compelled to act, man still has scope for personal exertion or direction of his propensities, as commanded in the next sloka, viz. None shall come under the sway of the senses (mental powers), in which originate the two opposing currents of likes and dislikes. Each sense-power has got attachment for a to it pleasant object, and aversion for a disagreeable object. These tendencies are men's foes. (34). Each man's nature or **Swabhava** is the resultant of two forces or tendencies—that of the universal Nature, common to all mankind, and the personal nature of the individual, wrought through all his past actions—both of which together determine his Swabhava. Hence no two men have the

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same nature, i. e. Swabhava, which determines in each case his likes and dislikes, introducing a personal bias, totally opposed to the Yoga poise of equanimity. How to overcome this internal foe ? This is the question of Arjuna in (36), and answered in the last 7 slokas of this Chapter. Meanwhile Sloka 35 which like slokas 45, 47 and 48 of Chap. 18, has been raising nightmares in the materialist has to be disposed of. "It is better, that man does his own task as he may, even though he fails, than take to tasks not his own. To die performing one's own duty is no ill but to seek other roads will surely imperil his (spiritual) progress. (35). Every man has his own vocation : the talent is the call and determines his calling. Here, he is at his best. By doing his own work, he unfolds himself ; the law of his growth is then a ccelerated, and the world also profits thereby. Ordinarily men embrace the trade they fall into, dictated by custom : then, is he a part of the machine he moves ; he is lost, unless he finds in that vocation an outlet for his spirit and character, not alone a means for his living, so that he may justify his existence in the eyes of other men. If the labour is mean, make it liberal by your thought and character. Two vital issues are raised. What is a man's own task ? Who decided this ? What is a manly success in life ? What is the yardstick by which success is to be measured ? Materialism decides the issues in one way and Spiritualism the opposite way. Hence the same confusion and difficulty in understanding these four slokas (including 3 of Chap. 18) as is felt in the Lord's command to Arjuna to carry on the war, and lead it to its destined conclusion. The Gita does not measure success in life by the mighty Dollar, nor is the yardstick of material utility applied to determine one's Swadharma or task. Whatever act helps life and saves life is Swadharma, while act that destroys life and hinders its progress is Paradharma or Adharma. (Vide Gen. Int. for the elucidation of these slokas, under Swadharma).

The question of Arjuna (36), "Impelled by what does man commit sin, being forced to act against his will ? It is desire (Kama), passion, born of ignorance. Anger is only a modification of desire—its immediate consequence when

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thwarted. Rajas, from which springs desire, is active passion, and it can never be cooled or satisfied by enjoyment, since it grows with what it feeds on. **The Ignorant look upon desire as a friend, thus making sufferings their birth-right** (37) **Desire is mighty of appetite, and man's mortal enemy.** As smoke blots the white fire, as clinging dust clouds the bright mirror, as the womb confines the babe unborn, so is life in this material world shrouded by the desires of the flesh (38). Even the wise get caught in it: desire is an unrelenting foe of wisdom (39). Senses, mind and Intellect are its field of booty, beguiling them with its deceitful subtle flame of intoxicating pleasure—the sweet poison, it saps knowledge and judgment (40). Hence destory this sinful enemy, by constraining the entangled sense. (41). The external sense organs of the body are strong: but the internal organs of the sensory powers, that discern the world, are stronger than they. Superior to these sense-powers is the mind which controls them. Superior still is the Intellect that can guide the mind aright. Yet even superior to the Intellect is He—the Soul (42). Knowing the Soul which reigns supreme, put forth the full force of the Spirit to vanquish this invincible foe (desire), though he wears countless alluring forms, from off the mind (43). The unfailing power to destroy this indomitable foe of Protean nature is our Divine Spirit, sought through Bakthi. Reliance can also be had on the methods of Raja Yoga, (*Vide. Gen. Int.*) where the first step lies in making the mind one-pointed and passionless, free from desires.

Chaqter IV. The Yoga of Wisdom.

The Fourth chapter entitled the Yoga of Knowledge, also deals with action of the highest type. The first 16 slokas explain fully the phenomenon of **Avatarhood**, or the suguna aspect of the Supreme in the world, its purpose and work, including the nature and scope of worship that man should offer to reach his goal. In slokas 17 to 32, the mysterious nature of action and inaction are explained with examples of the virtue of desireless works offered as sacrifice in varied

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manner. Finally, wisdom and its power to render all actions seedless is extolled in 33 to 42. The imperishable ancient doctrine of the Yoga of Action covered in Chap. III — the truth of which, with, long years, grew dim and now again declared, led to Arjuna's question regarding the Lord's manifold births or Avatars. (1 to 4). While the Lord had knowledge of his incarnations, Arjuna, like all beings, was ignorant of the many births and deaths he himself had passed through. (5). All men and all lives undergo many cycles of births and deaths, impelled by their karma, but the Lord who is above Karma, who is unborn, undying and indestructible, manifests Himself in human or other form, now and again, to serve His own creatures. (6). Avatarhood for the sake of upholding Dharma would be unnecessary, since it could be secured by ordinary means, without His active incarnation. Yet, **Avatar holds before men the Lord's own example,** how human nature may mould its principles, thought and action, showing the way men shall follow. In fact, the chief aim is the raising of man into the Godhead, helped by the descent of God into humanity, as admitted in 9, 10. Man, by the knowledge of the Avatar's divine birth and divine works, comes to the Divine, and by becoming full of Him, and taking refuge in Him, he attains to the divine nature and status (9, 10). It is to assist the ascent of man Godward that the descent of the Divine in human form is made, as, such example encourages man to grow towards Divinity. By succouring the good who uphold Dharma, by thrusting the evil back that promotes Adharma, and setting Virtue on her seat again in the world, Avatarhood causes humanity to hold together, at times of great crisis. (7, 8).

The Lord shows what can be repeated in the inner life of all human beings, *Himself becoming the living assurance of man's divine possibilities.* The Avatar assumes all human limitations, to show how same should be overcome. Christ underwent all human sorrows and physical sufferings, so did Buddha and all Hindu Avatars. Sceptics cavail at the pehnomenon of Avatarhood. Only the blind can be cured, but not those who refuse to see. The difference between the birth of the ordinary human beings, and of the Avatar of

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God lies not in the process, which is the same. The Doctrine of Incarnation common to both, states that the re-incornating Soul by its past Spiritual and psychological evolution, itself determines, and in a way prepares its own vehicle. No body is prepared without reference to the Soul the body should fit. The Ten Avatars of God would have to be understood in such spirit, though by confining merely to the external forms of the Avatars, support may be sought for a theory of the ordered progression of the evolving consciousness, from the rudimentary stages of lower forms to the highest types and order in life — from ameoba to man. The First Three are in animal forms — The Fish, The Tortoise and The Boar. The Fourth is Animal-Man — Nara-Simha: then, the man Dwarf — Vamana: next, the passion — moved Parasurama, followed by the divinely natured Rama, ethically stern. The eighth is the awakened Spiritual-man Buddha: the completely Divine-Manhood Krishna is the ninth, and the Tenth yet to come is Kalki.

Cosmos is God: there is nothing else in existence. All beings are His Soul and body-forms, and in their individuality, are unborn spirits, for whom birth and death, are only phenomena of the assumption and change of Forms, which are finite and therefore imperfect. In this assumption of imperfection by the Perfect, lies the mystery. Yet, such imperfection appears only in the forms assumed, and in the actions emanating thereof, not in the Spirit, even as the Sun has no defect of light or vision, all such defects being only in the capacities of the individual organs. The Avatar is not helplessly brought into the world by Prakriti, which, being subordinate to the Spirit, is full of the will of the Avatar, who is still the Self-conscious Being, not becoming, as in the case of other births. The Avatar is still Atman, while other lives are Bhuthani, i. e. becomings. In both, Maya is the tool employed — only in the case of the Avatar, it is Self-Maya, and the birth is a birth into Knowledge, and not into ignorance as in the case of man and other living beings. The Soul in all ordinary births is lost to Self-knowledge, and is bound by Maya, which turns self-knowledge into an error of egoism. Man's ignorance is because, upon

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his assumed form, there is a seal of Nature, imprinting her phenomenal qualities on the life, with the result, that the nature aspect in man, overbears the Divine aspect — there is less of consciousness and light, but more of energy. Having emphasised Knowledge and self-surrender, based on complete Faith as being the sure means of attaining the Supreme state, the Lord proclaims **His unique assurance, which is the hope of all men of all religions.** "I reward men in accordance with their ways and motives — not for mere wishes unsupported by merits and efforts — with which they seek Me. I grant to both, the Good and the Bad, what they are after, for I am not at all partial to anyone. In whatever Form men worship Me, in that same Form I also reach them. Know that all forms of worship lead to Me only." (11) The Gita establishes the Truth which is higher than all religions. Each individual has the right to choose that form of belief and worship, which most appeals to him. Difference in names becomes immaterial, since any name, at its best, connotes the same Supreme.

Mankind is at various levels, and therefore, seek, God at verious levels and in various aspects. The same God is at one stage, a power, at another a Personality, and at a third, a Spirit without form. Some worship the Absolute, some a Personal God : there are those who worship Ancestors and Deities. And some there are who worship Petty Forces and spirits, having even evil nature. The feeble minded see God in wood and unshaped stones — not idols which are the work of Art, moulded in conformity with the spiritual concept — their mental bhava not very much removed from that of the children using dolls. The strong in spirit find God everywhere, but the low mental level of the masses at large remains unaffected, by the highest notions of Vedanta. Taking all religions, the mystics all over, of whatever religion, have experiences in which all religious conflicts vanish. When love of God is sincere, divergences become impossible — the Soul of each experiencing the One Reality. Even their expressions, of the profound sense they felt in the grasp of the Absolute, agree, and unit them, and they all protest against the exaggerated importance attached to outward

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forms and dogmas, which divide the common man. *The attitude of Hinduism is one of comprehensive charity, and its supreme tolerance of all Faiths to bring into one fold, all believers in God, is vouchsafed in this assurance of the Lord Himself* (11). Truth wears virtues of many colours. The dominant note of Hinduism is one of respect for all other creeds. "However the Potter may make, all were made to contain the wine: and the wine which gives the pots their worth is One." In this world, some for a wage, and many others out of a false sense, undertake conversion. All religions are more or less true, proceeding from the same Reality, though, all are imperfect, because, they come down through imperfect human instrumentality. Why then, cross from one compartment to another, if it does not mean a moral rise? Proselitisation, for political ends, can lead to no spiritual advantage. In this world of Action (Karma Bhumi), success is quickly attained in the shape of rewards for works done, and those who long for same, make sacrifices to the inferior Powers. But, it is from Me, the rewards reach men (12). Not so in the case of spiritual efforts, for whose success, the nature of action itself has to be reoriented, as well as the attitude of the person completely reversed, as regards enjoyment of the fruits of works. I am He, who made the **Four-fold Division** or classification of men, and portioned them a place **after their qualities and natural gifts.** Know, this is the work of One who is Actionless, Immortal and Immutable (13). Works soil not My Essence, doing work uninvolved. Following My example, all those saints of old, seeking deliverence, worked. Thou also work, as thy forbears did in days gone by, and action will not bind thee. (14, 15), A full discussion of this polemical topic has been taken to the Gen. Int. under Caste, Swadharma, Four-fold Order etc.

The definition of Action, Inaction and Non-action is attempted. In regard to the true significance of these terms, knowing which man shall be liberated from the wheel of birth and death, even the wise get perplexed. The difficulty arises because, action is profoundly subjective, and the springs of action are invisible being spiritual. (16, 17). The world judges action by external standards, based upon its

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pragmatical, social and humanitarian results, and actions conforming to such standards, generally, do not lead to the peace of the actor, nor release him from the ills of life. Action is not what its external manifestations reveal to our senses; we are often deceived by appearances. Hence, Gita's criterion of a man of true wisdon, a Yogi, is — "Any one whose power of discrimination enables him to see inaction in Action and also discern action as still continuing in external cessation of activlties, i. e. inaction. (18). The ignorant man who is the slave of his Nature, sometimes seeks to avoid the consequences of his actions, by taking refuge in external inactivity, in the delusion that thereby he does not work. Such compulsion is of no avail, for Nature all the same carries on all the activities for which the being pays the price. The is **Action in Inaction.**

No life can ever remain really actionless, yet Sanyasa contended that action was a bar to liberation: hence the oft repeated burthen of the Gita, directed towards its repudiation, in its command to Arjuna. No teaching is necessary to urge man to action, which in any case, is inevitable: yet its teaching is directed towards urging man to act, *without becoming bound thereby*. To perceive action in inaction is to know, that external abstinence of itself does not amount to cessation of activities, because, internal desires are not controlled and avoided. Having to bear the burden of the body, action becomes inevitable: hence, in giving up the fruits of action, one has done his all.

On the other hand, the enlightened life, exercising complete control over Nature, even in the full flood of physical and mental activities, because, he knows that Nature it is that carries on the works and not he, lives in freedom, but not in bondage to such works of Nature. Hence, he does not act, though his life is fully active. This is **Inaction in Action,** and is the result of the Highest effort of the Buddhi. His discriminating intelligence makes him not afraid of the activities of the body and mind, which perform acts, not in subjection to his nature, but in obedience to the directions of the Divine Will. The fundamenta] proposition, that man

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is Soul, and not his body, is restated here. This is Gita's philosophy in essence, the key to solve all life problems, to destroy man's Moha or ignorance, to strip all works of their tainting and binding characteristics, making Karma, turn into the most helpful Akarma. To guide man to raise himself to this exalted state, is the burthen of this Song Celestial. The action of the enlightened man, being divinely directed, is not only free from desire, but renders desire impossible, since ego — the brood of ignorance, is dissolved by Knowledge. (19). Even the sage has to perform, actions, required for the bare maintenance of the life, and also for the well-being of the world. Such acts do not bind him (20). Quit of fear, aspiration and attachments, rejecting external standards, taking what may befall, with equal calm and without envy, unmoved by joy and grief, by good or evil fortunes, well established in knowledge, offering all his works as sacrifices to the Lord - his actions, becoming seedless, do not bind him (21–23) The double fulfilment of action in inaction, and inaction in action is the goal. Action is not opposed to inaction, since God is, both active and inactive, Suguna and Nirguna. The Vedantic ideal is a partial truth, as it leads to world-destruction or, an actionless world, which is impossible.

In chapter III (10 to 16), the Vedic Sacrifice was described, and now, in slokas 24 to 32, Sacrifice with true knowledge offered to Brahman, which leads the votary straight to liberation is dealt with. The virtue of selfless action is propounded throughout this Fourth chapter, emphasising that **knowledge-based sacrifice alone is effective**. The idea of the instrument of action and of the accessories of action, the idea of action itself and of its results — each one of these is substituted by the idea of Brahman, since none can exist apart from Him. All is Brahman — the sacrifice, the ghee, the grain, the fire, the offerings which the fire eats, are all Brahman and into Him attaineth the votary who, in such office of sacrifice meditates on Brahman. This is Wisdom Sacrifice or Gnana Yagna, for there is no knowledge other than Brahman. (24, 25). Some control and direct their senses along channels allowed by the Scriptures, restraining the senses from interdicted objects. (26). Some attain to Samadhi,

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by stopping the Prana and all the functions of the body thereby, since the activities of the mind and body are kept up only by the vibrations of the Prana. (27). By Pranayama the mind stops its wandering habits, becoming single-pointed and calm. Regulation of diet also controls our passions, by the weakening of the organs which through overfeeding or the wrong nature of the diet, get out of control. (*Refer Raja Yoga in Gen. Int.*) Some denying needs, lay life itself as sacrifice, and all these, thereby, efface much sin. (29, 30). Whoever makes no offerings of sacrifice to Brahman has no part or lot in this world. What to talk then, of his share in the higher world ? (31). This world is only a field of expiation, not a hunting ground for enjoyments, without merit or effort, and he who offends this law is a thief, a sinner. (Chap. III—13, 16).

Brahaman is the embodiment of sacrifice, born of action, and Knowledge is Brahman. Hence, action and knowledge are one. All actions in their entirety culminate in the knowledge of the Divine (32, 33) Material sacrifice or Artha Yagna, leads only to material benefits, and therefore Gnana Yagna is better : more so because the worth of the material sacrifices and gifts lies in the mind of the donor and in his will. There can be no opposition between action and knowledge : **works are not obstacles, but means to attain true knowledge,** which one should seek, by offering his humble services to those who have attained the Truth. (34) Knowledge alone can destroy ignorance, and doubts dispelled, man is enabled to see all beings in himself, also himself and all beings in the Supreme (35). The idea of not only a common origin, but complete identity between God and His creations is established here. The potency of Knowledge is such that even the worst wrong-doers get absolved of their transgressions by means of knowledge, because Knowledge is the fire that consumes all dross away from actions. (36). Knowledge burn out all sin in actions, reducing them to ashes. (37). Action that is fried in the fire of knowledge is purified of its binding and tainting dross. ***In this world, there is no purifier to equal knowledge.*** (38) And what a blessing ! This knowledge is automatically reached by the Yogi who is full of Faith in the Supreme, and consequently attains the Supreme. (39) Ignor-

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ance and lack of faith lead to doubt, and a doubting mind sins most, and goes to perdition. There is no hope nor happiness here or anywhere for a doubting-life. (40). Vanquish doubt with the sword of knowledge, internally renounce all works, take refuge in Yoga, then, works do not bind you. (41, 42). Slokas 33 to 42 unmistakably establish that Knowledge is imperative for right conduct and action which are possible only when our ignorance and doubts are destroyed. It is the acqua regia to dissolve all the shortcomings, defects and sin in our undertakings — since perfection in action is impossible in this world. (Chap. 18—48.) This dependence of works on knowledge involves no risk, since knowledge is automatically vouchsafed to the Yogi. Does knowledge need the intercession of works in the process of liberation? The Gita, despite the denial of the Vedanta, answers in the affirmative in all the chapters.

Chapter V. The Yoga of Renunciation

The Yoga of Renunciation, in fact, assesses the merits of the Sankhya path and the Yoga path, adding details to their respective special characteristics, and affirms that the two are not different, being complementary to each other, and that both succeed because of their common foundation — the vital Yoga Poise. Arjuna is still in doubt as to which is the better way — the Sankhya path of Gnana brought on by the renunciation of works, or the Yoga path of Works, resulting from the **internal** *renunciation of action and its fruits* (1) Gnana Yoga and Yoga of works, both lead to the bliss Supreme—yet, Yoga of works is to be preferred. (2) He who is proof against all dualities, neither hating nor desiring, firm in his mental equipoise, is the true Renouncer, the eternal Sanyasi and is beyond all bondage. (3) It is childish to view the two paths as being different or opposed. for who husbands one of them, obtains the fruits of both. (4) Who sees Sankhya Gnana Yoga and Yoga of works as one, alone sees Truth, for both lead to the same goal — liberation. (5) Yet the path of Knowledge is difficult of reach without the mental equipoise of the Yoga-yukth, easily attained by the Karma

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Yogi — vide Story of Tulabara in the Gen. Int. The yoga-harmonised pure heart who is master of his senses and ego-self, though engaged in action, quickly reaches Brahman. (6, 7) Compare Chap. IV — 22 "This sense-world plays with the senses. Nought of myself I do." Thus, will the enlightened think, wherever he acts (8, 9). Compare Chap. III—27, 28. Unconcerned with the ends, but only working for the sake of Brahman, the Yogi moves, unsullied by the sense-world, even as water moves about on the lotus leaf. (10), With the body, the mind, the intellect, and even with the senses, the perfectly controlled Yogi **works hard to attain self-purification (Atma suddhi)**, and he gains endless peace renouncing all the fruits of action. (11, 12). One who is passion-bound, hankering after the fruits of his deeds, gets enslaved to them, and is in bondage to them. While the embodied but enlightened being, *mentally* renouncing all his works, enjoys bliss in this nine-gated city (body), neither doing any action (for Nature, it is that acts), nor causing any act to be done (for, the Cosmic Will directs all actions) (13). Man thus, has no lot or part in organising action, or in executing it or in receiving the fruits thereof. All these do not concern him. (14). The Supreme Being takes on Himself the good or evil deeds of no man, neither man's merits nor demerits. It is error or delusion, born of ignorance, which imposes on the mind dualities and differences. (15). The Intellect alone must undo what delusion it has itself wrought. Ignorance can only be dispelled by knowledge, which like the Sun of wisdom, reveals the Supreme. (16). The importance of the development of the discriminating faculty in man, whatever be the path chosen for liberation, is emphasised, again and again. Jnana is a must, but not necessarlly the Jnana Yoga path.

Meditating on Him, seeking Him, getting identified with Him, surrendering to Him, the enlightened being casts off his sin by the strength of the Faith in Him and reaches the goal whence there is no returning. (17). *Wisdom induces Sama-dhrishti (same attitude) towards all beings*—an imperative for all aspirants, but such equality is **attained more easily by the Karma Yogi** than by the Gnana Yogi as the world

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which the latter avoids is the only field where equanimity can grow, serving also as the touchstone on which its strength can be proved. (18). The mind, rooted in equanimity, becomes Brahman is essence. Even in the life, this world is overcome by those who have their faith in Unity and Equality in which Brahman dwells. (19) Not over-glad in attaining joy, nor over-sad in encountering grief, firm and constant in intellect, unperplexed, avoiding sense-joys that breed sure griefs which have a beginning and an end, man tastes eternal peace. (20 to 22). Prem or affection to one's relations becomes a sin to be avoided when it comes in the way of equality towards all life. The place of love is only in so far as it leads to benevolence to all with attachment to none—not even to oneself, one's kith and kin. Happiness lies in the elimination of lust, desire and anger. and whoso withstands these is blessed. (23). The Yogi, who has the inner happiness, repose and ease, the inner light and peace, becomes Brahman, and reaches the state of self-extinction in Brahman, attaining Brahma Nirvana. (24). They in whom the stains of sin are effaced, and the knot of doubt is cut asunder, and who are occupied in doing good to all creatures, those Yogis win Brahma-Nirvana (25). Ascetics who practice self-mastery by Yoga and austerity, being delivered from desire and anger, gain Nirvana. (26). Having laid aside all outward contacts and touches, with mind and thought concentrated on attaining liberation, practising pranayama, the Yogi becomes for ever free. (27, 28). These two slokas deal with **Dhyana or Meditation,** *a part of Raja Yoga*. He who knows Me as the enjoyer of sacrifices and of worship, as the Lord of all the worlds, as the friend and guide of all creatures, and also as the God Unrevealed, he attains peace. (29). From sloka 19, the Gita speaks of Brahma Nirvana—akin to the Akshara or Nirguna state—the ideal of the Vedanta : but in the details and in the description, there is the unmistakable indication that such Nirvana is to be reached in this life, in this body and in this world, by the Yogi who becomes unified in the pure Consciousness, immanent in him. Nirvana can co-exist with world consciousness, and divinely controlled action is com-

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patible with the state of Brahma-Nirvana or Akshara, since the Suguna and Nirguna states are only two simultaneously existing aspects of the one Purushottama.

Chapter VI. Yoga of Self-Restraint and Meditation

Whoso does the works to be done, without resorting to its fruits, i. e. performs Karma Yoga, he is the Sanyasi and the Yogi—not the man who gives up the world and his legitimate duties. Tending Fire or Agnihothra was enjoined upon a householder—not on the Sanyasi—hence, an householder, merely by giving up tending the fire, cannot become a Sanyasi. (1). When Sutti was in vogue, it might have been true with some that their faith prepared them to embrace the ordeal of self-immolation, while with others it should have been the cruel pressure of social custom, forcing the victims against their weak will. So with the Stoic discipline which merely crushed down the common affections of the human nature, the outcome of an extremely biassed undivine notion of the world. With Sanyasa too, starvation or other causes may render the physical senses inactive, because of incapacity, while still retaining the longings of the mind. So shunning the world and its works is no true criterion of Sanyasa; what they have called renunciation (Sanyasa), know that to be in truth Yoga, for **none becomes a Yogi who has not renounced the desires of his mind.** (2). Doing works, and yet renouncing before-hand all fruits thereof, is the way of the Yoga, reaching the top of which, the Yoga of Meditation or Dhyana becomes the proper means for liberation. (3). Setting fruits aside for the world, unbound by works, and unmoved by desires, who acts, he is at the height of Yoga. (4), Slokas 5 and 6 are very important as enunciating a vital practical principle of conduct in life. Here, the use of the same word, Atman to denote the ego-self as well as the Soul-Self in man should be correctly interpreted to avoid confusion in meaning. "All beings should up-lift themselves and ennoble their ego.self by means of their Soul-Self. Running down the ego-self will do no good, as it may turn

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a possible friend into a fiend. This lower ego-self alone is our friend or foe, and there is no external enemy to our life." (5). He who is successful in **controlling his ego-nature, by his Soul-self**. has secured a true and faithful friend in the ego-self, while failure to master the lower nature by the higher in us, results in harbouring and nourishing an inveterate enemy, who works always for our bondage and suffering. (6) The problem of life, thus, centres round the problem of controlling and training our ego-self, who should be subordinated to our Soul-self, when all goes happy with the life, and this world becomes a heavenly abode: whereas, if ego is let loose without any control, to act according to its bent, which is sensuous, it turns the world into a veritable hell, which is our common experience. The injunction to follow one's nature in Chap. III — 33, as already noticed, is not a licence to lead an ego sense-life, interdicted in the next sloka itself. Every life has two natures — the lower and the higher. In conquering the lower nature by the higher, no violence shall be used, especially by the harsh exercise of our will, usually resorted to, in asuric persecutions of our body. The role and responsibility of our Higher-nature (the Soul-self) in this process is patent. Whatever may have been the first cause which impelled the Soul to take a body, the responsibility for the subsequent impulses in getting embodied, rests solely with the Soul, in the onward march of the life, towards liberation. The lower ego-self nature, with the intellect, mind, senses and other bodily organs, owing to their native affinity for the sense-world, exerts a pull away from the divine higher nature, thus, producing a tug of war inside each being. Strange though it is, Buddhi has to represent the Higher nature as well, and in the measure of its ability to represent this divine in us, lies the success of our life — spiritually. The failure of the Buddhi, in giving an upward orientation to the life, will lead endlessly to the cycle of birth and death of the life, for, this world-drama will only end, with the ending of the ego-rule in us, giving place to the Soul-rule. The Soul has thus a purpose in taking a new body, while the body has no motive of its own to fulfil, yet, an uncontrolled tool can prolong the sufferings, and delay the Freedom. Brahman, in whom dualities are dissolved, is

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reflected in the enlightened Being enjoying peace. (7). To the wise-man, well versed in material and spiritual lore, and who is at the pinnacle of the Yogic state, gold and clay make no difference. (8). He is the best, who sees no difference, loving all alike, whether friend or foe, relation or stranger. (9) Slokas 10 to 13 describe the *physical aids to Yoga,* as per Raja Yoga, and further on, its principal means—Meditation, in which perseverence with regularity is of paramount importance. **Meditation is the potent antidote to evil thoughts.** Brahmacharya is insited upon, since lust wastes away the vital energy, otherwise sublimated into Ojhas, and lust is an enemy to all spiritual efforts. Grahasthas, who have perfect control over sex, can also ascend the ladder of Yoga, like Janaka and other Rishis who had consorts. Moderation is another indispensable virtue. Extremes pair not with the Yoga state. A moderate yogic diet, in quantity, is:- Fill only half the stomach with food, then a quarter with water, and leave the remaining quarter, empty for the free motion of air. You then have no indigestion, no fatulence, no disease of bowels or liver. **Yoga is a solvent for all pains.** Sitting lonely, in a fair still spot, neither too high nor too low, with all his belongings given away except a cloth, a deer-skin and the kusa-grass, his thoughts controlled, his passions stilled, he meditates steadfastly, setting his mind hard upon the Supreme. In calm and silence, with heart and senses restrained, he achieves the pureness of the Self, through Yoga. Holding his body, neck and head immovable, with his gaze fixed and absorbed upon the tip of the nose, free of fear, firm in his vow of Bramacharya, devoutly musing on Me, and lost in the thought of Me, such Yogi comes to Peace eternal or Nirvana. (10—15) Yoga is not his, who too much fasts, or too much feasts, or who sleeps away an idle mind, or wastes in night-long vigils. Moderate in eating, in resting, in recreation, and measured in wish and act, he succeeds in **yoga — the solvent for all earth-aches and ills,**

A well-balanced being, whose sama-dhrishti extends throughout the whole of the universe, is a **Yogayukth.** (16 to 18). Steadfast, the lamp burns sheltered from the wind — so the Yogi's mind shut from sense-storms, broods placidly

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on Me, and the Soul enjoys the bliss It alone can, such bliss being beyond the scope of sense. (19 to 21) Wherein abiding, one does not slip from the Truth, which having reached, there is no higher status to be gained, wherein established, he is not moved even by the heaviest of griefs, that is the Yoga - state, the severence from union with pain. (22, 23). Intellect and will must toil steadfastly, till efforts end in ease, becoming automatic and involuntary. The mind shall shed all its secret desires and pet longings, and abide in the Soul-self, while the intellect, discriminating between the real and the unreal, shall wean away the mind from the transitory, tempting objects of the senses, which lead to a painful end, both in dealing with as well as in parting from them. *When from the mind even thought has passed away*, **peace comes as a gift to the Yogi.** (24, 25), If the mind breaks wild, let it be re-curbed and brought under control of the Soul-self, for perfect bliss grows only in a calm passionless state, and purged of all sin, the Yogi enjoys the happy unity with Brahman, which is exceeding bliss. (26 to 28), The Yogi sees his Soul-self resident in all beings, and also all living beings as contained in his Self (29). Whoso discerns Me in all and all in Me, that Yogi becomes never lost to me, nor I ever become lost to him. (30) Well established in Unity, whoso worships Me — the dweller in all beings, that Yogi abides in Me, whatever his life, and wherever he may be. (31). Taught by the eneness of all beings, if one sees everywhere in all beings the same, whether in goodness or in evil, hold him to be a Yogi perfected. (32).

But how is this mind to be tamed and controlled, since to deal with it is more difficult than to hold the wayward wind ? (33, 34). By patience, by practice and by the formation of habit alone, the wayward mind is to be restrained and tamed, step by step. But success is assuredly his who stoutly strives thereto. (35). **Meditation is the best mind-tamer, and faith alone is its aid. Vairagya** or dispassion is indifference to sense-objects brought on by constantly looking to the hurt inherent in them. Without controlling the ego-self by the Soul-self, Yoga can hardly succeed. (36). What is the fate of him who fails in Yoga, because of the uncontrollable,

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intractable mind, despite best efforts and good faith? (37). Deprived on the one hand of the blessings of Yoga, and on the other of the worldly experience and enjoyments he had given up in the pursuit of Yoga, is he not lost like a rent cloud that is tossed about by the winds in the sky? (38, 39) *There is no loss, not a bit to Yoga efforts, which never perish and are never wasted.* (Chap. II — 40). Nothing good has ever come to grief, here or anywhere. Right deeds are never taxed, never have to pay any penalty: only evil deeds have to pay their dues. (40). Having attained to the world of the virtuous, the failed Yogi is reborn in the house of the righteous and the just. There, starting, not from Scrap, but from the height he fell from, he begins his efforts, borne on by the power of the old efforts and attainments, and in due course, perhaps after many births, reaches perfection in Yoga which takes him beyond the Sabdha-Brahman or the Vedas, where no more the vedic ordained karmas find a need. (41—45). Such a Yoga-yukth is deemed superior to the ascetics (Tapasvins) who observe austerities of speech, mind and body, superior to the man of knowledge, and superior to the man of action. (46). The limited application here attributed to the terms Gnani and Karmi should not be lost sight of. It is not a Gnana Yogi or a Karma Yogi who is referred to in the comparison, for they are all co-equal with the Yogi. Knowledge of the Shastras, and the performance of the Vedic rites have all been shown to be inferior to the knowledge of Brahman, and to the performance of desireless actions offered as sacrifice to the Supreme in His world. Yet, even among these Yogins, who with faith in Me, his self absorbed in Me, worships Me, he is deemed by Me the most devout and best. (47). It is only in the Snpreme that one shall find his surety and shield: hence, the finale in the process of liberation is devotion to Him, faith in Him, and self-surrender unto Him. Karma, Gnana and Bakthi are never disparate but work in their unity.

The 18 Chapters of Sri Gita are divided into three blocks, of which the first block of six chapters deal with the following tenets of **the Principles and Practice of Life and Existence,** viz.,:— That man, because of his ignorance of

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the true Self and Nature was unable to act correctly, that true knowledge and meaning of his Existence was a prime necessity to destroy his ignorance, that action was inevitable, and that the springs of action were desire and selfishness which led man into his bondage and suffering, that the remedy for same lay not in avoiding action which was impossible, but in eschewing the fruits thereof, so that desireless action, offered as sacrifice to the Supreme in His world, became the only way of escape from the predicament of having to act, at the same time, avoiding its undesirable effects, that the Yoga poise of perfect equality and a steadfast intellect were essential concomitants for the ideal life, and above all, the firm conviction that man was neither the actor nor the enjoyer of actions, but that Nature was alone the executrix, performing works for the pleasure and enjoyment of her Lord. *Very valuable practical hints for overcoming the mischief of the senses* and their sense-objects, of the destruction of desire and attachment, of the conquest of the senses and the stilling of the mind have been advanced to root out man's 'moha' for his body and other possessions, through the synthesis of Knowledge and Works with Bakthi as the greatest element. The above, in bold outlines, but without details, have been spread out on the canvas; **who man is, what is his purpose in life, what are his obstacles and how same can be overcome to enable him to reach his goal.** The second series of six chapters comprising Block Two, go into details and deal with intellectual statements of Spiritual and Cosmic Truths which are metaphysical attempts to define to our limited minds the ultimate Truth which can only be lived and experienced, but never completely expressed through the finite medium and manner available to man. The works of the Gunas, the relation between the Soul in Nature and the Soul Supreme and the secret of self-surrender to the Master through Bakthi are covered, ending in the finale and climax of the Viswarupa or Cosmic Vision, giving a dynamic turn to the synthesis of Knowledge and Devotion. The Seventh Chapter carries the title of the Yoga of Wisdom and Realisation, and the facts covered by the discourse have been fully explained in the Gen. Int. under appropriate topics with which the reader will please renew his acquaintance.

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Chapter VII—Yoga of Wisdom and Realisation

The very first verse strikes the **key-note of the middle block** of six chapters of the Gita—**Bakthi or Devotion** to the to the Supreme, as the easiest means ever available for man to attain his goal. With mind intent on Me, firm in the Yoga poise and taking refuge in Me, you shall certainly come to know Me fully, for I shall declare in full this *Knowledge of the Self and other knowledge about My world and creatures.* It is a fact that very few strive for perfection or liberation, and even among the few, perchance, only one may know Me in truth. (1 to 3). Earth, water, fire, air aud Akash—the Panchabuth forming the five basic elements, with the trio—Mind, Intellect and Ego, the eight-fold Tatwas, form the inferior or Lower Nature of My Prakriti: different from this is My higher or Para-Prakriti, the Soul in Nature, by which all manifestation is upheld. (4, 5). Prakriti is not independent of the Lord: it is subordinate to Him, being His Prakriti—a vital departure from the traditional Sankhya. No mention is made of the 15 Tatwas which are subordinate to the Mind (Manas), because they are only the off-shoots of the Mind and covered by it. They are:- the five Sensory Powers, the five functional organs of knowledge, and five functional organs of action or motion. The three Gunas, which form Tatwa number one, are taken up separately owing to their extreme importance. Thus the 24 Tatwas are accounted for. The Soul in Nature is not of the same kind as the 24 Tatwas: It is different and without Its support, there can be no creation. The lower and Para Prakrities are the womb of all beings. As I am Myself these two Prakrities, so I am the source for the origin and dissolution of the whole creation. (6). **The Supreme,** not only **identifies Himself with every thing,** but takes the ultimate responsibility also upon Himself. He is everything: there is nothing whatever besides Him. Everything is strung on Him like clusters of gems or pearls on a string (7). Matter, evolved from Prakriti—the energy part of the Spirit, is in its ultimate essence, Spirit itself. Science has not yet defined what the substratum of matter is. It has only recently come to the conclusion that energy and matter are convertible states. Science is hard at establishing that

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matter is the ultimate in existence, possessing consciousness, intelligence and life. But the fundamental matter of the Scientist has repudiated all the properties usually associated with the concept "matter" in its aggregate-(vide, Gen. Int).

I am the sapidity in liquids, the sun and moon, the mono-syllable Om in the Vedas, sound in ether, virility in men, the sweet fragrance in earth, the brilliance in the fire, the life in all beings, austerity in the ascetics, and the support of every thing. Know Me as the eternal seed of all. I am the intelligence of the Intelligent, the splendour of the splendid. Of the strong, I am the strength, devoid of selfish desire and attachment: in all beings, I am the desire unopposed to Dharma. (8 to 11). All powers and merits, in whatever form expressed in this world, are only derived from Him as the source. Evil or demerit is only merit and power abused in opposing His Will, Law and Dharma. Desire is legitimate where the end sought is in accord with His scheme. Man can marry strictly for the purpose of the preservation of the race, but not for indulging and enjoying his sex instincts. Strength is for the purpose of carrying on works that promote Dharma, not for self-aggrandisement or for upholding adharma. All beings and things, whether pure (Sattvic), active (Rajasic), or inert (Tamasic), know them all to proceed from Me alone; yet, I am not in them-they are in Me. Deluded by the various modifications of the three gunas of Prakriti, all the world knows Me not, nor My nature of immutability, unchangeability, imperishability and inexhaustability: instead, they attribute to Me the six modifications of, existence, birth, growth, change, decay and death, usually suffered by My creations. Verily, this divine illusion of Mine, msde up of the three Gunas is difficult to over come. **Those who take refuge in Me alone cross over the Maya of the Gunas.** (12 to 14). Here is the first introduction to the Gunas—Tatwa number one of Prakriti, whose primary function is the perversion they cause in the universe. They are variously called, as Maya, Avidya or Illusion, and their mystery will end only with the self-realisation of the being. As the principle of Ignorance and as the principle of carrying out action they are invincible and only Divine Grace can help man to

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get over them, as affirmed in this sloka. *(See Gen. Int. under Three Gunas.)*

The wrong-doers, the deluded and the worst of men who do not seek Me, take to evil ways, their knowledge destroyed by Maya. (15). **There must be the powerful intellect to know right from wrong, the real from unreal.** Ignorance is the root cause of all evils, screening God and hiding all knowledge of Him from His creatures. Four kinds of mortals know Me and worship Me—the afflicted and distressed, the seeker of Knowledge, the seeker of wealth toiling to help others and the enlightened wise. Of these four, the last, the enlightened devout wise man is exceedingly dear to Me, and though all the four are good and virtuous, the wise I deem as My very Self, for they alone, with steadfast mind, are established in Me as their supreme goal. At the end of many births, they come to Me, realising that everything is Vasudeva. Yet hard it is to find such a Mahatma. (16 to 19). The first three worshippers are also dear to the Lord, but they are after some return, seeking some good to result from their worship: not so the wise, who, being desireless, aim at self-realisation or identity with the Supreme, which makes all the difference between the two categories. Modern man who has relegated God for holiday use, thinks of God, whenever in affliction, or driven by greed, but such prayers, to have response, must be based upon virtue as well as merit—not mere wishes. Janaka and Vidhura are examples of seekers of knowledge: Sugriva, Dhruva and Vibishna sought worldly lordship, while Sukabrahmam and Sukhdeva were pure devotees for devotion's sake. There are those whose intellect and knowledge, perverted by their various desires, make them serve some lower Deities, with various rites, impelled by their inclinations. Whatever shape, in whatever shrine the devotee may worship with faith, it is I who give him that faith, endued with which he engages in the worship of that Form, and from it obtains what he seeks; yet it is I who award the same. These men of little minds obtain the lesser blessing, even which is soon withered. Each worshipper goes to where the being he worshipped is, and passes out with the exhaustion of the small fruit he reaped. But My devotees

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come unto Me. (20 to 23). Exertion involved in the different kinds of worship is the same : because of the narrow outlook and constrained vision, a big difference is made only in the results. (Compare Chap. 4—11 and Chap. 9—23.) The ignorant deem Me, the Unmanifested as manifest, not comprehending Me in my true Self, Imperishable, unborn and viewless, I am hidden by the veil of My Yoga Maya from the idle world, by whom I am neither seen nor known. But I know all—the past, the present and the future. (24 to 26). **All creatures live bewildered and deluded by the twin snares of Raga (likes) and dwesha (dislikes)** from which arise the passion for the pairs of opposites : only a few, through holy acts, getting absolved of sins, avoid the snares of such dualities, and with faith, worship Me. (27, 28) What veils God from the view of His creation is Ignorance constituted by the three gunas whose first mischief is the injection of Raga and Dwesha into every being at birth itself. Instead of finding the unity underlying all creation, Raga-dwesha seeks a division—the mother of all evils. "Those who know the Truth, know Me as Brahman, and seek in Me refuge from birth and death. Know Me as Adhyatman—the Soul of a souls, know My work as Karma and Myself as Adhibhuta, Lord of Life, as Adhidaiva, Lord of all Gods, as Adhiyajna, Lord of Sacrifice, and if with love and faith you worship Me even at time of death, you reach Me." (29, 30). The various aspects of the Cosmic functions over which the Supreme presides are enumerated here, and form the question of Arjuna for full elucidation of same in the next chapter. The hint is thrown here that the Supreme is not the Unmanifested alone, as emphasised in slokas 24, to 26 but includes other aspects as well, to be elaborated hereafter.

Chapter VIII

The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman

The title corresponds to the Ultimate in Vedanta, which in Gita is only one aspect of the Triple status of the Supreme —*a vital departure from the traditional Sankhya, needing an*

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explanation. Man's final liberation slowly works through several stages. Beginning by acknowledging the value of the Self in other beings, and discovering a law other than that of his own desires, man moves god-ward, more and more recognising and allowing for the claims of the Self in others than to the claims of his ego, thus enlarging his altruistic tendencies and also consciousness. In this manner, he prepares himself to rise through the finite into the infinite. When his desires and ego, at first governed and regulated, get extinguished ultimately, he perceives that the Self in him and the Self in others are one. His increasing impersonality makes him lead an impersonal life, whereby he lifts his consciousness and the poise of his being, out of his limited finite personality, into **the infinite and impersonal Brahman, which is the first spiritual necessity,** yet deemed the final in Vedanta, where this Impersonal has no activity, no desires, no objects to be gained, and no dependence on the world or creatures, but existing for itself in Its own Self-delight. All works cease, all creation dissolves, and with nothing, there is one great void of silent calm Bliss. According to the Gita, the ego getting destroyed, the being attains **impersonality in his works**, and becomes free, not only in inaction but also in action. Works are continued, and the Self, directing an impersonal being, in his activities, remains calm and free. The nature of action is regulated, and the objectless compulsions of Prakriti to perform works are turned into godward movements for the benefit of all creation. The impersonal Brahman is not the very last in the Gita, as personal and impersonal, the finite and the infinite turn out to be only two concomitant aepects of the Supreme who is both these at once. **Brahman is the delivering impersonality in the process of liberating man** from separative ego-sense. Man cannot attain his liberation directly from the mutable Kshara personality, but only through 'reaching' first the infinite impersonal state of Akshara—**the poise of a perfect peace and equality is a must, though not the goal.** No question of superiority or inferiority arises where the one cannot do without the other, as is the case with the functions of the Trinity—creation, preservation and destruction, or in the case of the triune

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path of Works, Knowledge and Devotion for liberation. If Brahman were the goal, then the world and all creation have to be negated, contrary to our experience and also destroyed, though these are what make for the glory of the Supreme as proclaimed in Chapters X and XI. The attributes of Akshara are stated in this chapter.

In answer to Arjuna, the Lord declares, " I am Brahman, the One Eternal God. I am also known as Adhyatman, since My Being is the Soul of all Souls, the Kshara aspect, having its play in the Para-prakriti. I am Adhibuta, the Lord of all Lives, presiding over all the objective phenomena of Cosmos, formed by the lower Prakriti. As Adhidaiva, I am the Lord of all the Devas and Deities—the presiding powers who energise and enable the organs to function in all beings. As Adhiyajna, I am the Lord of Sacrifice, an aspect much talked about in (III—10) and (IV—24 to 32). Karma goes forth from Me only, causing all lives to live. (1 to 4). The Lord does not exclude Himself from any aspect of His creation. He is Lord of Work and Sacrifice. He is the Soul, the Body and the Prana. Whoso leaving his body at time of death, goes forth remembering Me alone, he attains My Being: there is no doubt about this. (5). But whoso, at time of death meditates otherwise, thinking upon other deities and objects of desires, he goes to what he looked for, because the Soul fashions Its abode to his likes. (6), **The last thought of a being** which must also have been the thought most forceful and prominent throughout its life, determines the nature and character of the form of the being in the next birth. The analogy of the wasp and the caterpillar is in point. Constantly thinking of the wasp, its enemy, the caterpillar is eventually turned into the wasp, It is impossible to suddenly change the whole life-thought at time of death, to wish or think differently, therefore, **at all times, remember Me only,** and carry on your Swadharma. With mind and heart fixed in Me, thou shalt doubtless come to Me alone. With the mind not moving towards anything else, with thought made steadfast through habitual meditation and constant practiee one reaches the Imperishable Supreme, the Holiest

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Being. (7, 8). Who knows Me as the Lord of sage and singer (Poet), the Ruler of the three worlds, the Ancient, the power that quickens the minute atom, of inconceivable form, more effulgent than the Sun, dispelling darkness and ignorance, has thought only of Me. So goes with him at time of death, who with mind set fast, and by the high reach of Yoga practice, fixes his still breath in the middle of the eyebrows and meditates on Me. (9, 10).

The Veda knowers name Me, **Aksharam — the Imperishable**, and unto Me the self-controlled Ascetics and Sanyasins, the passion-free celibates enter. That same goal is his who mentally controls his senses which are the gateways of sense-activities, by withdrawing the consciousness from them, and who controls "thinking" itself, by holding his life-breath fixed in the head, and with concentration, meditates uttering the mono-syllable Om, (*See Gen. Int. for the merits of OM*), when he departs leaving the body, reaches MY Abode. (11 to 13). Whoso looks to Me only for ever, not thinking of any other God or Deity, such a Yogi easily gains Me, and having reached Me, such great Souls never fall back to life and birth, the womb of pain, but remain eternally in utmost Bliss. (14, 15). All worlds even Brahmalok—the abode of the Creator Brahma—roll back and forth from death to life, but Mine is everlasting, and none reaching there has rebirth or return. Each day of Brahma is a thousand Yugas, and so is each night of his. When the Day breaks, the unmanifest, the invisible is brought into the manifest and visible state, which is evolution or projection or creation. At break of Night, involution or Pralaya takes place, and all which is, goes back into Him who sent them forth during Day — the manifested becoming unmanifest, like the tree in the seed. At Brahma's Day, all beings, without their will, are compelled to rise to new life which expires at Brahma's Nightfall (16 to 19). Unlike the life of sense, subjected to the cyclic changes above described, there abides another Life which endures, which is eternal and unmanifest (Avyuktha), which is the Infinite, the All, where arriving, none returns. That Life is Mine and I am there. (20, 21) **The only way to come thither is through unwavering devotion to Me.**

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in whom all things dwell and by whom all things are pervaded (22). The unqualified stress on Bakthi is noteworthy, being the easist path for our times. The next five slokas speak about the propitious and unpropitious periods for the departure of life from this body. Day time, the bright fortnight, the six months of the northern path of the Sun, in the presence of fire and light, whoever dies, he goes forth never to return, for he has no rebirth; but dying at night, in darkness, in smoke, during the dark-fortnight and the 6 months of the southern sojourn of the Sun, the departing life returns, being re-born. (23 to 27). Metaphorical interpretations of these metaphysical ideas are being made by some, but these slokas, without having any bearing on the main subject, render the process of liberation most arbitrary and mechanical. From the study of the Vedas and Shastras, through the performance of fasts and prayers and austerities and giving of gifts, vast merits are said to accrue as fruits there-of, but much richer than these holy fruits is the Yogi's who attains to the perfect Peace of the Supreme. (28).

Chapter IX

Yoga of the Kingly Knowledge and Mystery.

A deeper insight into the knowledge of the Soul-Self and Brahman is vouchsafed in this Chapter. It is the greatest secret and mystery whose knowledge alone frees man from evil, and leads him to liberation, since it is the Truth to be known. The only person disqualified from knowing it is the jealous person, as jealousy or heart-burning leads to doubt. It is a royal lore, the purifier of and the solvent for all sins, hence readily takes the votary to his goal, i. e, liberation. But those who lack faith in it, they never obtain liberation, sinking into the realms of this world of flesh and change. (1 to 3). **FAITH** is belief born of personal experience, not a mechanical assent dependent upon external authority, called superstition, desirous of enjoying the consolations of religion without the labour of being religious. Faith it not an opinion held intellectually, but a power by which spiritual things are apprehended: hence, is a Soul-power controlling the mind which is completely possessed by the idea, the

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mind that holds the idea becomes possessed by the idea. It is an unshakable firm conviction by which the whole being of the faithful becomes what he believes and no other. True strength lies in the certainty and faith with which we feel our identity and unity with the idea. The faithless are those greedy, lustful and sinful persons, the followers of the philosophy of flesh, worshipping the body as oneself.

Faith defies description, like the taste of a mango, which can only be felt and enjoyed by actual eating. Here are some examples from Paramahamsa which carry conviction. The faith of Hanuman is proverbial. It was such that it alone enabled him to cross the sea with one leap, while others required a bridge to cross the same. Once, Vibishana, after he became king of Lanka, had to send a message to Sri Rama at Ayodhya, and writing on a leaf, "*Ram, Ram*" and enclosing same in an envelope, he gave it to the person taking the message, saying, "**Have Faith and walk on the sea.**" The messenger obeyed and was easily walking on water and crossing the sea. Soon, Pandora's curiosity came into his head, and, opening the envelope, he saw nothing except the writing. Doubt entered into him and he lost faith. Soon, he sank under the waters and died. In a family, the deity was daily offered worship with cooked rice as the offering. One day, when the head of the family was away, his very young son was asked to conduct the worship, which he did, making the usual offering. In his innocence and in full faith, he expected the deity to eat the proffered food, but as this did not happen, he burst into tears, and implored the deity not to let him down, and this faith was not in vain. When his people asked the boy as to what had happened to the food, he explained to them which they verified. The Name of God is not to be trifled with, for God is not different from His Name. Devi Rukmani, the senior consort of the Lord, put only a Tulsi leaf, coupled with the Name of the Lord, in full Faith, to counterbalance the other scale pan where Devi Satyabhama had heaped up all her wealth with the Lord Himself to boot, urged by her vanity and jealousy, in which Faith can have no part or lot. Faith won the trial, and jealousy got its due discomfiture.

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A Guru had instructed his disciples that Rama alone had become everything in the world. Once, when a dog began to eat the pupil's bread, he addressed the dog thus, " Oh, Rama, wait a little. I shall butter the bread." Such was his faith in his Guru's words. Worthless people always doubt, and the doubting Johny is all-wise doomed. Asked to go round the world by their mother, Goddess Sakthi, to get her necklace as the prize, Lord Muruga, the younger of the two, set out on his peacock for a full round of the world. But the elder Ganesh, just made a round of his mother, and prostrating before her, claimed the prize as the winner. The mother praised Ganesh, and gave him the prize. Here again, it is Faith that wins. Goddess Shakthi was more than the world, and this the elder Ganesh knew in full faith, and faith had its reward. Energy and wealth, lavished upon actions, done without faith, and without true knowledge to guide, are utterly wasted.

By Me the Unmanifest, the whole vast Universe of things is spead. In ME are all existences contained ; Not I in them. Yet, all those beings do not exist in Me. My Being, creating all, supporting all, still dwells outside of all. This is the Mystery. Created things have no independent existence, and the Creator, being Infinite, cannot exist or indwell in his finite creation. Though He is in all beings, He exceeds them. The boundless winds move in the measureless space of Akasha, likewise, all My creations move and rest in Me. (4 to 6). Popularly, Akasha is the blue sky, an illusion caused by light falling upon the atmospheric air. Akasha is one of the Tatwas, comprising the Pancha Bhuth, translated as the elusive ether of Science. Hindu thought conceives of this Akasha as the omnipresent, all-penetrating substratum which is manufactured into the universe or Cosmos by the power of Prana. Everything in existence is the combination of Akasha and Prana, At the time of Night or Pralaya, when there was neither aught nor naught, when darkness was covering darkness, what existed then ? " Akasha existed without motion, for Prana was stopped, becoming potential. At start of Day or Creation, Prana striking upon Akasha, evolved all the

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various forms—Sun, Moon, Planets, humans, etc. At the close of each Kalpa, all creations go into Me, and I send them forth again at the commencement of the next. (See Chap. VIII–18, 19). Animating My Prakriti, I send forth again and again into the world all beings,, helplessly driven by the power of My Prakriti. (7, 8). Life in the world, under the rule of Prakriti, subjects the being to Affliction. (Khlesam), Avidya (Ignorance), Egoism (Ahankaram), Likes and Dislikes (Ragha-Dwesham), and Moha or clinging to the earthly life of the senses. These **Acts of Creation and Dissolution, through My Prakriti,,** do not bind Me. Under My auspices, Prakriti carries on her work. How she executes My will and Law is not My concern or responsibility. I sit apart, nowise attached. (9, 10) God does nothing nor cause anything to be done by being the cause of Prakriti. Egoism alone breeds the notion of agency snd with Raga—dwesha, causes the attachment to the fruits of action. The self is free from both.

The Ignorant mistake Me, not knowing **My secret Presence in all** the manifested forms, nor are they aware of **My hidden power, exercised through My Prakriti** that rules all life. Pursuing vain hopes, doing vain deeds, fed on useless partial knowledge, they foolishly seek the evil path—the life of the brutes and fiends. But the enlightened noble Souls, taking refuge in My Divine Higher Nature, and knowing Me as the Eternal and Imperishable source of all Life, Worship Me with mind undivided. Always speaking of My Glories, ever seeking Me only, keeping their vows of love and reverance, with firm faith, they adore Me. Some worship Me, the All-faced with Knowledge-sacrifice (Gnana Yagna). Some worship Me as One (the Adwaitins), some as distinct (the Dwaitins) and others as manifold. (11 to 15.) I am the Sacrifice. I am the Prayer. I am the Offering. I am the healing herb. I am the ghee, the Mantra, the Flame, and that which burns, the Father, Mother, Ancestor, Guardian, the One to be known; I am the Purifier, I am OM. I am the Rig, Yajur and Sama Vedas, the Goal, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Shelter, the Friend, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Seed and the Seed-sower. As the Sun. I give

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heat. Heaven's rain is Mine to grant or withhold. I am Life Immortal. I am Sat and Asat – Visible Life and Life Invisible. (16 to 19). Every thing has Three States: (1) The Gross or Sthula, like the body: (ii) the Subtle, Astral or Shukshma, like the senses, mind and Prana: (iii) the Causal, karana or Seed state, like Vignanamaya kosa and Anandamaya kosa in man. *(See Gen. Int.)* God is Nirguno-guna; He is Infinite and Finite. He is Real as well as Phenomenal. The learned in the Vedas, the drinkers of the Soma, purged of sin, make sacrifices, pray for enjoyments in the Higher worlds, which they earn from Me. Yet, when their merits have been exhausted and spent, from the heavens, they come back to the world of Karma, suffering births and deaths. The Vedists following the Veda's writ have their recompense in fleeting pleasures which they seek, and I grant the same. (20, 21). **But to those blessed ones who worship Me, turning nowhere else, I secure their welfare and good, the same being undertaken by Me as My responsibility.** This is an important **Divine Declaration of Human Rights**, that our 'yoga', or gain in our aim of liberation, and 'shema' our welfare in our present life in the world, i. e. our 'yogashema' becomes His care and duty to secure for us, provided we think of Him and nothing else, and carry on our task in conformity with His will. *Ananya* means, with the conviction of non-separateness from Him: with this faith He must be worshipped, to entitle us to his immediate care and protection. (22).

Of those who worship other Gods, endowed with faith, they worship Me alone, though they are praying wrongly, which prayers reach Me, since *I am the receiver and the Lord of of every Sacrifice.* They know not this Truth, and hence their misguided efforts take them back to the earth again. Who follow Gods reach the Deva Lokh: to Pithrulok go the ancestor-worshippers: to evil Bhuth, sink those who follow Bhuth-worship: but whoso loveth Me, cometh to Me. (23 to 25). See also IV—11, VIII–21, IX—6. **Whoever offers Me in faith aud love, a leaf a, flower, a fruit, or mere water, that I accept,** if offered with pure devotion. (26). This is **the Magna Charta of the Poor.** The Supreme can never be bribed, except with pure devotion. The injunction of the

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priest to offer costly gifts is pure greed, to enrich himself, and in no way adds to the merit of the worship: rich offerings more often are made for show and vain-glory, in which case, they earn sin, the reverse of merit. Whatever act you do, whether you eat, or offer sacrifice, give gifts, pray or fast, let it all be consecrated to Me and done in My name. Holy men, whatever they take in as food, take same along with the name of God: so with all acts, you pronounce the Lord's name; thereby, you free yourself from 'Karmabandh', the bond which enchains you to good and evil results, and at death, you safely come to the Supreme. (27, 28). The same I am to all beings. I know no hate, nor do I show any favour to any: but those who worship Me alone with faith and love, they are in Me and I am in them, establishing our identity. (29), Compare sloka 29 with Chap. IV — 11. Grace of God reaches only those who long and work for it. The mirror and the mud-pot, both presented to the Sun's ray which impartially strikes both, but the mirror reflects the light while the mud-pot does not, the different results are due to the difference in the nature of the two. The fire gives you warmth, and the tree gives its shade and fruit, only when you approach for same: if you keep away from them, it is your fauit, not their's. If one of evil ways, turns in his thoughts to worship the Supreme and none else, with utmost faith and devotion, he should be counted among the good: having chosen to walk along the right path, he will soon grow righteous and attain to eternal peace. (30, 31). Rogue Ratnakara became Rishi Valmiki by his holy resolution and wrote the inspired Ramayana. **Birth, caste and sex act not as bar in the spiritual realm.** Man or woman of any caste, whether Vaish or Sudra, or the lowly degraded, of sinful womb born, whoso will turn to the Lord, all attain to the highest state, for what is material is the purity of the faith and devotion. Saintly Nandanar is the proof. (32). Liberation becomes much easier with the noble Sattvic beings and the Raja-Rishis who have ascended high in the spiritual ladder. Be certain that none can suffer, none can perish, trusting and taking refuge in the Supreme. (33). Having taken birth in this perplexing world, fix thy mind on Me: be devoted to Me: unto

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Me sacrifice all your acts: adore Me: set your faith fast on Me; make Me your goal, and unto My Abode you shall be guided. (34). Enumeration of the Divine Glories which are very much enlarged in the next two chapters (X and XI), and the very strong and repeated emphasis made on the **Path of undivided Devotion** to the Supreme summarise the teachings of this chapter, with its immense practical importance to the Poor, the Sinner and the Casteless.

Chapter X

Vibuthi Yoga or Book of Divine Glories.

The extreme contrariness and large opposition which we experience every moment of our existence in this world and with our own nature and conduct inimical to the concept of the Divine, make it difficult for us to have faith in the unifying fact of God, hence some compelling indications are needed to see, in the sinner and the harlot, the Divine. The Vision of the world Purusha aud His command follow as a necessary sequel, but the Vibuthi Yoga is essential to bring out the full meaning of the Vision following. Both the recital and the vision, reveal, in part only, the mystery of the World Existence. being inexhaustible. The physical mind, because it cannot see the Spirit has to be content with abstract conceptions, names, images and symbols recited in Chap. IX and X, but the Spirit sees Spirit, more intimately than bodily consciousness sees matter, and this is effected in Chap. XI. "Because you love Me, wishing your welfare, I will declare to you **My Glories** which neither the hosts of Devas nor the Great Rishis whom I Myself made long ago, know. Who knows Me as Unborn, Beginningless, the Adhi-karan, the Great Lord of the worlds, he alone among mortals is undeluded, is liberated from all sins. (1—3). Intellect, wisdom, non-illusion, forgiveness, truth, self-restraint, calmness, pain, happiness, birth, death, fear and also fearlessness, non-injury (Ahimsa), equanimity, contentment, austerity, the wish to give, the will to help, beneficence, fame, ill-fame, — these different qualities of beings arise from Me alone (4, 5). The seven great Rishis (Saptha Rishis) from whom the

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present inhabitants of the earth are said to have descended, are the first creations of God's mind: so also are the Four ancient Kumaras or Virgin youths who declined to marry and create progeny. Likewise, the Four Manus, for the four Yugas or Kalpas, burst forth from His mind, none of whom came out of the womb of any, as ordinary mortals do. Manus are rulers of men, and they frame the code of rules of conduct and laws of Dharma for the guidance and uplift of humanity, one in each Yuga. This sloka affirms that **Thought burst forth into creation**, becoming the first manifestation. (6). From them arose the races of mankind to fill this world. Thus knowing Me as the source of all and that by Me all creatures are wrought, the wise in spirit get attached to Me and seek to come back unto Me, with hearts fixed on Me, praising Me with pious thoughts and speech, they have happiness and peace. (7 to 9), To them, ever steadfast in worshipping Me with love, **I give the Yoga of Discrimination**, a mind of perfect mood, whereby they come to Me. **All for love of them**, I, dwelling within their Self, **destroy their ignorance, dispelling their darkness with the light of Wisdom.** (10, 11). The value of this merciful, magnanimous offer of the Lord, out of mere compassion for humanity, to let fall His Grace in the form of Buddhi Yoga can be fully grasped only by those who know the vital role of Buddhi in the process of liberation. True discrimination is ordinarily impossible of achievement through self-efiort by man, and what a boon, what a blessing, that this is promised **as a gift to the Devotion and the Karma Yogi** (Chap. IV — 39). Our ego, egged on by raga-dwesha, drives out true discrimination, and groping in darkness, we suffer all through life for lack of Light (Knowledge). In slokas, 12 to 19, Arjuna acknowledges the Lord as the Supreme, adding that what the ancient sages, Narada and Vyasa have said, are confirmed by the Lord's declarations. He then prays to the Lord, who alone is competent to speak about **His own Glories**, to recount some of the secrets of **His Majesty and Might** as the same will be Amrit to Arjun's ears and heart. The Lord accordingly declares :— *"I am the unmanifest Self seated in the hearts of all creatures* **From Me they come: by Me they live: at my word they depart,** (20). Among the twelve Adityas —

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one for each month of the year — I am Vishnu : among the luminaries, the radiant Sun: among Marutis (Winds), Marichi: among the Stars, the Moon : among the Vedas, Sama: among the Gods, Vasava (Indira) : among the senses, the Mind: among living beings, the Intelligence: among the eleven Rudras (Ten vital airs or Prana and the mind, as the eleventh), Sankara (Shiva): among Yakshas and Rakshasas, Kubera—the Lord of Wealth: among the Vasus (Original elements composing the Cosmos),Fire: among the Seven Mountains, Mount Meru; among the household priests of Kings, Brihaspathi or Guru: among Generals, Skanda: among Lakes, the Ocean: among the great Rishis, Bhrigu: among words, OM, the Monosyllable: among Sacrifices, Japa (the mental repetition of Mantra, silently); among the immovables, the Himalayas: [In Japa Yagna, neither injury nor loss of life is involved—not so in the other forms of Sacrifice.]

Among Trees, Aswatha: among Divine Rishis, Narada: among the Perfected, Kapila Muni: (Muni is one who meditates, who does Manana). Siddhas are those who attain, Dharma (Virtue), Gyana (Knowledge of Self), Vairagya (Dispassion), and Aiswarya (Supremacy) Among Horses, Uchaisrawas: among the lordly elephants, Iravada—the white Elephant, the vehicle of Indira. Among Cows, Kamadhenu: these three animals were born along with the Amrit, at time of churning the Milk-ocean, whence came the deadly Poison also, which was swallowed by Shiva, to save the world. Among men, the King; among weapons, the Thunderbolt: among Progenitors, Cupid (Kama—not lust): among serpents, Vasuki: among Nagas, Ananta: among the Governors, Yama—the Lord of Death: Prahlad, among Titans; I am Kala (Time): the Lion, among the Beasts: Garuda, among the Birds: Rama, among warriors: the Shark, among the fishes, The Ganga, among the Streams; among letters, the letter A : I am the all deavouring Death: among Metres, the Gayatri: among the Seasons, the Spring (Vasant): the gambling of the Fraudulent: the splendour of the Splendid: I am Victory: I am the Goodness in Sattva. I am Vasudeva: among those who seek success, I am the statesmanship: among Secrets, silence: among punishers, the Sceptre: among the Seers, Knowledge:

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among The Pandavas, Thyself, Arjuna, for you are Mine: I am the lore of the Learned: the seed of all beings—living or lifeless: "*No tongue can tell, nor end of telling come of My Glories*". (21 to 40). Wherever there is in any being, glory, prosperity or power, know it to be My manifestation. I exist apart, supporting this universe. (41, 42). The purpose served by the Glories enumerated above and in the **Cosmic Vision**, reported below, is to **reconcile and unify all denials and oppositions with regard to the Supreme**, so that there is nothing which is not IT.

Chapter XI.

Viswarupa-dharsanam or Cosmic Vision.

The Form of the reconciling oneness of the Vision is only for the rare highest Soul. It cannot be won by the Vedas or austerities, or gifts or sacrifices, but only by that Devotion which regards, adores and loves the Supreme alone in all things. (53, 54). This is the Bhakthi Yoga which the Gita proposes for the Devotee. *Nothing has real need to fear except evil, ignorance and asuric power which have got to be destroyed to bring about perfection in them.* The Vision is an integrated ALL in one view, "The Vision has faces every where, speaks from its innumerable mouths, is armed for battle with numberless divine uplifted weapons, has glorious ornaments of beauty, lovely garlands of divine flowers, shines with a light of crores of Suns. It is magnificent, beautiful, terrible, monstrous, orderly, wonderful, sweet aud awe—inspiring, has numberless arms and bellies, infinite eyes and forms on every side, though no end, middle or beginning is to be seen. In It all begin, exist and end. Time and Death are there as Destroyers, but only of Names and Forms. The eyes of the Destroyer are suns and moons—enormous and burning—with mouths that gape to deavour, terrible with many tusks for destruction. From the burning mouths, fire licks all the regions around. This is an aspect from which the human mind willingly turns away, and tries to hide itself, so that perchance, not seeing, it may not be seen by the Destroyer. Hinduism does not join in the general game of hiding the

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harsh and the terrible from human mind. It knows that God is love and peace, but Destruction is also the Truth. To make an opposition between world—nature and God—nature, as if nature were independent of God, or to throw the responsibility on man and his sins, or to create a Satan in opposition to God are clumsy devices in which Indian thought never took refuge. The discords of the world are God's discords, and through these, we reach the greater concords. Nothing is destroyed for destruction's sake but to make room and way for a progressing manifestation. *(Aurobindo.)*

Delighted with a recount of the Glories of the Supreme Mysteries, his ignorance dispelled by the acquisition of the knowledge of the Self and the origin and destruction of beings, vouchsafed by the lotus-eyed Lord Himself, Arjuna aspires to '*sense*' the Eternal God's Very Self, if He will make Himself visible. The prayer being allowed, the Lord prepares Arjuna by endowing him with the Gnana—Chashus (spiritual—eye) which alone will enable him to see the Infinite with unending number of multiple forms, of different sorts, in various colours, with Adityas, Vasus, Rudras, etc., in the body of the Eternal,—a glory never before revealed to any one. Then Sanjeya makes a report of the Cosmic Vision as seen by Arjuna and summarised above (1 to 14), adding that the amazed and thrilled Arjuna bowed down his head, and with joint palms in the attitude of worship, addressed the Cosmic Form as follows:—

"I see all the Gods and creatures of earth and heaven in Thy body and in Thy countenance; seated on the lotus is the four-faced Lord of creation, with saints and sages and the serpent races. Your boundless Form, on every side with manyfold arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes, without end, middle or beginning, do I see. With diadem, club and discus, you are a mass of radiance and splendour, blazing like the burning sun, turning darkness into bright noon, expanding into Infinity. The abode, the refuge and treasure—house of the Universe, You are the Imperishable Ancient Purusha, the guardian of the Eternal Dharma, the Supreme to be worshipped. Infinite in exten-

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sion, in power, sun and moon being your eyes, the burning fire your mouth, heating the whole universe with your radiance and filling all space, your wonderful and terrible Form makes all the three worlds shake and tremble with fear. Into You enter all the hosts of Devas, some extolling in fear with joined palms. Bands of great Rishis and Siddhas praise You with hymns complete, saying. "May it be well". Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Aswins, Maruts, all are gazing at Thee in wonder, getting quite astonished. All the worlds are terrified, seeing Thy immmeasurable Form with many eyes and mouths, many arms, thighs and feet, with many stomachs and teeth fierce. I too am terrified at heart, and find neither courage nor self-control to see Thy Cosmic Form, touching the sky, and shining in many colours, with mouths wide open and with large fiery eyes. Having seen Thy mouth, fearful with teeth and blazing like pralaya fires, and unable to discern the four cardinal directions in Thy limitless Form, I have no peace. Have mercy on me, Oh Abode of the Universe. (15 to 25). Oh shelter of Virtue's laws, the Fount of all Life's streams, Oh, Mystic Awful One, into the cavern of Thy wide-opened throat are hurled those noblest ones, Bhishma, Drona and Karna and the great Dhritharashtra's sons, caught and crushed. The Kings and Chiefs and the armies of both the sides, torn and riven, are helplessly forced into Thy gaping jaws, and there lie mangled, and ground into dust and death. The heroes in this world of men pour, in unending stream, with helpless haste, into Thy flaming gorge, like torrents of flood running headlong into the unfilled ocean. All the multitudes still throng to their death, like moths fluttering towards a light to their fiery doom. Thyself having fashioned men, Thyself devourest them again. Tell me Who art Thou, why hast Thou a face so fierce, and whence doth this horrible aspect proceed ? (26 to 31).

The Lord replied :— "I am the mighty world-destroying Time (Kala) who brings all to doom, come hither to consume all. Even if you fail to act none of these shall leave alive the battle-field. **By Me they fall, and thou art only My instrument.** The stroke of death is already dealt by Me at Dhrona. Bhishma and all. *It is I who bid them perish* : *become*

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thou the tool. (32 to 34). Who kills? — the Judge, the executioner or the Law which is the embodiment of tha Public Will? Having heard the Lord, the crowned one (Arjuna) with folded palms, prostrating himself, trembling with fear, in a voice choked with emotion, began to worship the Form. "It is meet that the whole universe delights and rejoices in Thy surpassing Power, obeying Thee. Evil-beings, having wronged against Your Dharma, fly in fear of Thee to all quarters: but all the hosts of Siddhas bow to Thee as their object of adoration, love and delight. Thou God of Gods, **Life's dwelling place and Rest**, the Soul of all souls, the source of forms and formlessness. Thy aspects are numberless. Vayu art Thou and Yama dark, who keeps the prison of Narak (Hell), and Agni (Fire), Varuna (rain and water God); honour and worship, glory and praise be to Thee: unto Thee a thousand salutations: Namo Namaste on every side to Thee, the all pervading, Omnipresent Being, the Infinite in power and prowess. Whatever I have said in familiarity and friendship, regarding Thee merely as a friend, not knowing Thy Greatness, in whatever way I may have offended Thee in fun or frolick, that I implore Thee to forgive. Be Thy grace granted for all the witless sin committed unknowingly, for now I know Thee to be the Father of all the worlds, Guru of Gurus with none to equal Thee, with none to share Thy Majesty. I crave Thy forgiveness as father to a son, as friend to a friend, as one who loveth to his lover. It is good that I did see this marvel of Thy Form: but fear mingles with joy: Be merciful to take to the visage that I know: let me see Thee in the form I loved of old with disc and forehead gem, with mace and anadem." (36 to 46). The Lord resumes His usual form, familiar to Arjuna, and assures him to shake off all troubles from his heart for having seen His Terror with His Glory, a view that was wonderful and terrible and which the Gods dreaded, though desiring to view continually. Such a sight is not to be secured by any other means except **by the fullest service and perfect faith and uttermost surrender.** (47 to 53). Only by single-minded devotion can I, of this Form, be known and seen in reality and also entered into. He who does act for Me, who looks upon Me as the Supreme, who is devoted to Me, who is free

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from attachment, who bears enmity towards none, he comes to Me. (54, 55), These two slokas contain the summary of the entire Gita Teaching.

Chapter XII — Bhakti Yoga of Devotion.

With the Cosmic Mission, Gita's purpose is achived and brought to completeness: yet, this chapter adds something more to bring out the meaning of the spiritual change or conversion, whose exposition took up the first XI Chapters. Here the difference between the current Vedantic view and the larger freedom which the Gita opens out, is dwelt upon viz., that *action is not only possible but inevitable both before and after liberation*, that **the Supreme is both impersonal and personal**, and that *devotion to Him must go on at all stages*. Arjuna himself starts the discourse with his question, whether the worship of the Revealed or the unrevealed takes the better way of faith and life? (1). "I hold very holy all those who serve Me, fixed and steadfast in full devotion. Those who worship the Nirguna, the Undefinable, the Immutable, the Unmanifest and the Eternal, having restrained all the senses, even-minded and intent on the welfare of all beings, verily they come only unto Me: yet, *greater is the effort and arduous the trials for* those whose minds are set on the Unmanifest, the Formless and Attributeless." (2 to 5). (See Chap. V — 5. also Chap. VIII.) The devotion to the Absolute — the goal of the Vedanta, through pure Gnana Yoga, thus put aside as unsafe for most of mankind **the worship of the Suguna Brahman is advocated.** The present discourse extolls the virtues of the true Bhakta (Devotee) who. through the Yoga of Devotion, goes to the Supreme, notwithstanding his several disabilities and short comings. Bakthi Marg is held out as the easiest for the aspirant, who establishes a near and dear relationship with the Supreme in any one of the five Bhavas:- Shanta, Dasya (Servant to Master), Sakhya (friend to friend), Vatsalya (son to father), and Madhurya (lover to the beloved). Ungrudging, unconditional surrender is the attitude to be cultivated. (See Chap. XI—55) Renouncing self for Me, with mind fixed to serve only Me, ever musing on Me, I swiftly take him forth

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from this world of distress and death. Cling fast to Me, clasp Me with heart and mind; but if thy thought wanders away, and you are weak to set heart and soul upon Me, do not despair, do not lose heart, but try the next best, even though a lower move. Train thy mind to fix on Me, by dint of constant practice. (Nama-Japam Nama-smarana is the best yoga to steady the mind on the Lord). The effort needed will not be as much as one puts forth in serving another in the world to obtain wealth, power and fame. (6 to 9). If thou art unable to practice and fix thy mind on Me, then, become steadfast in doing all actions for My sake alone, and by so doing, thou shalt attain perfection. Action here is not restricted to Vedic karmas or to Kirtans, Bhajans, Pujan, but embraces all activities performed in the manner acceptable and pleasing to Him. (*See Gen. Int. for Swadharma.*) (10). If you cannot do even thus much, at least, give up the fruits of your actions to Me, having full faith in Me. (11). Better indeed is knowledge than practice: than knowledge, meditation is better: than meditation is the renunciation of the fruits of actions, for peace immediately follows such renunciation. (12). This is Gita-sara in practice, Gita-rasa in action.

Having offered alternatives, one after another in slokas 8, 9, 10 and 11, in the decreasing order of their difficulty in performance, the Lord weighs their relative merits in sloka 12, the least difficult of them all, scoring the highest merit. Here practice refers to yoga practices of the austere and asuric types as well as rituals in the karma kanda of the Vedas which are very difficult of performance in the proper way: knowledge here means only the knowledge of the Vedas and Shastras, not Knowledge of the Self which is equated to perfection. Hence, knowledge is placed above practice, though considered inferior to Meditation which involves knowledge plus power of concentration. As between practice and knowledge, the recent dictum of an English Lord, the head of one of the biggest industrial organisations in the world, that an ounce of knowledge is better than a ton of practice, is worth quoting, as against the old saying that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of knowledge.

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Renunciation of the fruits of action is superior to all, as this is possible where desire has been completely rooted out, leaving what all aspire for, viz., peace. Beginnnig with sloka 13, the following 8 slokas called, Amritashtakam, the eight Nectors, describe the characteristics of a Bhakta, as in (Chap. II—55 to 72), we had of the Man of Steadfast Intellect (Sthitha-Pragna) and of the Yoga-yukth in Chap. VI—10 to 23). He who hates nothing of all which lives, himself living benign and compassionate, exempt from arrogance and love of self, unmoved by good or evil, patient, contented, firm in faith, having self-control, vowed unto Me and seeking Me alone, that man I love. **Mercy** is a divine attribute, and man becomes most like God when he shows compassion to all creatures. A Bhakta offers full security of life (Abhayadhana) to all. "The quality of Mercy is not strained. It dropeth like the gentle rain from heaven. It is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives and him that takes." (*Shakespeare*). (13, 14). Who troubles not living-kind, and is not troubled by them, freed from joys, anger, envy, fear, he is dear to Me. (15). Free from wants, pure, unconcerned, well-balanced, working for Me, yet from all fruits detached, he is loved by Me. (16). Who neither rejoices nor hates, nor grieves, nor desires, renouncing both good and evil, full of devotion to Me, that man is dear to Me. (17) Unto friend and foe, the same at heart, bears shame and glory with equal mind, with an equal peace takes pleasure and pain, heat and cold, with desires quit, (18) silent and uncomplaining, content with anything, linked by no ties to earth, that man I love. (19) But most dear to Me are they the happy ones to whom **life is living in single fervid faith and love,** in My service, by following the Dharma of my Being. (20)

The Gita is divided into three sections according to the famous Maha Vakya of Sama Veda—**Tat Twam Asi**: Thou Art That. The first block of six chapters dealing with Karma Yoga, in the main, and with Nature–Soul in all beings is said to correspond to Twam (Thou) pada of the Maha Vakya. The middle block of six, from Chapter seven to twelve, chiefly explain the Bhakti Yoga and the nature of Tat (That), i. e. the Supreme. The last batch of six which we have yet

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to study deal with the path of Gnana Yoga and with the nature of the middle term, Asi, (Art) which establishes the identity of the Nature Soul (Twam) with the Supreme Tat (That). *(See Gen. Int. for the connection between this Mahavakya and OM: also with the Three States of Beings and with Gayatri.)* The method of the Vedanta is the Apriori method, proceeding from cause to the effect. while the method of Science is the Posterior, going from effect to the cause, generally. In the last block of six chapters (13 to 18), there is a restatement of the same teaching with details and relations made more prominent and enlarged; In the first six chapters, the distinction between the immutable Self and the multiple Soul veiled in Nature was stressed upon, with only hints thrown of the Supreme. The next six (chapters 7 to 12) brought to the fore the knowledge of the Supreme Godhead: they also brought out the two Natures—the Higher and the Lower, and then ended with the Cosmic Vision, so as to fouud a Unity of Works, Love and Knowledge. In the last block, we will see the precise relation between the aspects of the Supreme introduced as Purushottama - The Supreme, the Akshara and the Kshara. Prakriti in her action and her Gunas are brought out. Knowledge is amplified so as to root out Ignorance. Chapter 18 is a masterly recapitulation and summary of the Gita Teaching, viz., that Divine action, with Self—knowledge, as the instrument of the Divine Will in the world is accepted as perfectly consistent with the status of Brahman: what is more, action is considered as an indispensable part of the Godward movement — of course, such action being uplifted inwardly, as a sacrifice to the Supreme to whom it properly belongs as He is the promoter (not actor) and enjoyer of action done at His will.

Chapter XIII — Yoga of the distinction between the Field and the Knower of the Field.

This body, including the Four Kosas only, is the **Field or Kshetra**, and in this field, Life disports: He who knows this field is called **Kshetrajna** — *the knower of the Field.* This sloka establishes the fundamental proposition that Body

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is different from the Spirit which animates the body, hence the philosophy of materialism is null and void. (1) Know Me as the Kshetrajna in all the fields. **The Supreme is the Knower of the field** and is common to all the fields in existence. These Two Propositions make up THE KNOWLEDGE to be known. **Matter is different from the Spirit,** and that it is one and the same Supreme that is in all embodied beings, thus linking all creation into the closest bond of Spiritual kinship (2) Thus Purushottama or Paramatma or the Supreme, unlike His own Amsa — the Soul in Nature which is tied up with the individual body or field—pervades the whole universe, including each body (field). Though the individual Souls in the different fields (bodies) which they possess, are apparently different, because of their different Karmic load and stage of evolution, yet the Supreme in all the fields in One, since He is above all such experiences. The Soul in Nature, the "man on the spot", though really not affected by what all befall the being, is yet, by the interposition of Maya, not wholly free, vide, Anandamaya Kosa in Gen. Int. All delusions belong to the animated field only, and in the destruction of same lies liberation or freedom of the being. Sloka 5 enumerates the 24 Tatwas or original Principles already explained in the Gen. Int. Tatwa No. 1, the three Gunas are referred to as the Moola Prakriti. **Mind or Manas** is at the root of all activities, Every tendency takes its origin only from the mind which is the spring from which all passions, dislikes and likes, all differences, originate. It is the storehouse of error, cravings, doubt and ignorance. It generates thoughts and plans, and is a miraculous thought-producing machine. Desire, hatred, pleasure and pain, thought (intelligence) and fortitude, are all modifications produced in the field. (3) Objects do not please, if we do not desire or long for them. **Renunciation and Meditation** thin out the impressions of objects on the mind (memory), and consequently, lessen the desire for them. Humility-(the negation of vanity, absence of self-praise, absence of pride which is the conscionsness of possession of anything), unpretentiousness — (absence of hypocracy and dissimulation), non-injury (Ahimsa), forgiveness (which is the spirit of patience), uprightness — (freedom from double

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dealing, cunning, diplomacy and cleverness of the abusive type), reverence for the wise, purity, steadfastness, self-control, contempt of sense-delights, self-sacrifice, perception of evil and of the certainty of ill in birth and death, in age and sickness, in sufferings and sin, detachment, non-identification of Self with son, wife, home and possessions, constant tranquil mind in good and bad fortunes, deeply attached to the Supreme on the basis of non-difference, loving solitude, shunning noise of foolish crowds, constancy in Self-knowledge and perception of the goal of true knowledge as liberation — all these are declared to be **Wisdom,** and whatever is opposed to these is Ignorance. (7 to 11). Prem or affection to kith and kin leads to identification of interests with them which is ignorance. Distaste for the society of the worldly minded but not of the wise, holy and pure is conducive to attain true knowledge; all these are (Gnana sadhanas) helps to true knowledge. Those which make for ignorance are lust, anger, greed, pride, hypocracy, hatred, attachment, injury to others, cunning — all these produce Avidya, and can die only by the cultivation of their opposite virtue. Knowledge of the Supreme and the Self in us, with their identity, is the Knowledge to be known, for there is none other, which is complete, and true. It alone leads to liberation. The Para-Brahm, the Uncreated is neither Sat nor Asat, yet, both these and more. In Chap. IX — 19, He is described as both Sat and Asat: here the same is negatived apparently. The truth is, Sat and Asat are only two aspects, one without Form and the other with Form of the Supreme, called Purushottama, who is Himself neither Sat nor Asat, being beyond both these aspects of His own. This is Gita's conception of the Supreme, overriding and going beyond the Vedantic concept based on the Sankhya Philosophy. (12).

With hands and feet everywhere. with eyes, heads ears and mouths everywhere, He exists in the world, pervading all, enveloping all. Purushottama is the real Magnet, and all His creation are pieces of iron needles lying within the magnetic field, and getting magnetised. The community of minds and common consciousness seen in all beings in the

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world, have their source in this one Supreme. (13). Glorified in the mind and senses with which He hath endowed all beings, yet beyond sense He is,—Himself having no sense-experiences: sustaining all, yet, dwelling unattached to those creations He supports, master of all Forms and qualities, He himself hath created, yet, neither Form nor quality hath He. He is within all beings, and also without: He is motionless, yet is still moving. He is unseen, because of His subtlety, extreme tenuity. HE is close to all, to each: yet, very far away He exists. He is not manifold, yet as manifold He subsists in all living beings. He is the sustainer, supporter of all beings, yet, at the end of time, He brings about the end of all, and again re-creates them—the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer all in one. He is the Light, He is in the hearts of the Dark and the Ignorant, shining eternally. He is Wisdom, and guides the wise, planted in every heart. Thus, the Field, the Knowledge (the lore to comprehend) and the Knower have been briefly described. Whoso, perceiving thus adores Me shall come to Me. (14 to 18). Know that **Prakriti and Purusha are both unborn, beginningless.** The eternal Purusha is changeless and suffers no modification or vikara: all changes and modifications take place only in Prakriti and all actions proceed from the three Gunas of Nature. **Purushottama is the Lord of all,** and rules the Universe through His Will and Law that is Prakriti. (19). See Gen. Int. for the great departure of the Gits from the Sankhya.) This body is put to work by Prakriti only, when the Spirit doth inform the body, causing actions which cause feelings of pain and pleasure. This is a mysterious relationship between Spirit and Nature, where the latter owing to the sufference of the former, moulds matter and form, which it permeates with its gunas, to cause actions which lead to birth, again and again, with good or evil tendencies. (20, 21). Even then, in this bodily prison, the Spirit remains Pure, supreme, witnessing and governing also if allowed to govern, always the Master. (22). Knowing the Soul thus, and also the work and limitations of nature with her Gunas, the being has no illusions, and he is not born again to take the load of flesh. (23) Some attain liberation by the process of Meditation or Dhyana where a continuous

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and unbroken flow of thought towards the Supreme is maintained: some follow the Gnana Yoga or path of Knowledge of the Vedanta, some by the Karma Yoga, while some others, not well advanced in Yoga, worship Me with faith and also come to Me (24, 25).

Wherever **Life is**, in seed and in plant, or even in immovable things, know this is **the outcome of the bond or union between Spirit and Nature** (26). For any creation, whether moving or unmoving, the influence or interference of the Spirit is inevitable: he who sees this inevitable imperishable Spirit in all the perishable forms of creation, and identifies same with the Supreme, and further beholds in evry place and in every form, the Supreme, equally dwelling in them all, does not delude himself, and goes straight to the abode of the Bliss. (27, 28). He alone sees truth who sees that the Spirit is absolutely actionless, and that work is the sole province of Nature, and that from nowhere-else, action can emanate. (29). He who beholds unity in diversity, by seeing that the whole variety of beings, each with its own separate life, come forth only from the one Supreme, and also go back to the same Supreme, he attains Perfection. The Supreme without quality, though It pervades the embodied beings, neither gets stained nor does it ever act. Like the ethereal Akasa pervading all space never gets contaminated, so the subtle Spirit remains uncontaminated, even though pervading all matter and beings. Just as the light of the all piercing sun, the light of consciousness of the Spirit shines upon all the variety of objects of creation, and remains untainted. This is the wisdom of the true intellect which discriminates between the Field and the Knower of the Field, and whoever has this Knowledge truly, goes to the Supreme. (30 to 34). The Fundamentals of True Knowledge revealed in this chapter making a distinction between the Spirit and nature (body), and detailing their respective qualities and functions, form the basis of all our actions, which either help or hinder our life, depending upon how far our conviction goes with regard to these Fundamentals of Existence. A visit to and re-acquaintence with the Gen. Int. will immensely help in fixing these Fundamentals in our mind, since intelle-

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ctual conviction is a requisite pre-condition for spiritual faith. This chapter is also called Prakriti Purusha Vibhaga yoga. (Separation of Matter and Spirit)

Chapter XIV
Yoga of the Division of the Three Gunas.

The extreme importance of the correct knowledge about the three Gunas of Prakriti-Tatwa number one of the Sankhya-also called Moola Prakriti or Maya, lies in the mystery and impossibility of Knowing the full truth about these gunas. *(vide Gen. Int. on Gunas)*. Ordinarily, knowledge about a thing leads to its control and in this case, knowledge becomes liberation itself, and such knowing-beings cross over birth and death, and never more suffer change. (1, 2). The most practical and significant advise is given by the Lord in Chap. II-45 to Arjuna to over come and be above the sway of the gunas, which not only lead to action that is inevitable but also colour same with their own bias, thereby making it sinful—a karmabandh. If action is inevitable and unavoidable, should not the sinning bias injected by the gunas be averted by human effort and will? My womb is the great Prakriti: thence is the birth of all beings. Whatever forms are produced in whatsoever womb, the Great Prakriti is their womb and I, the seed giving Father. (3, 4). Prakriti is called Brahman here, since it is also divine. This is a repeat of what we saw in the previous chapter. **Sattva, Rajas and Tamas-the root cause of all creation** (i, e, action), bind the Spirit to Prakriti, but the nature of this bond is a mystery, hence called Maya. The gunas are not strictly qualities. (see Gen. Int.). **Liberation consists in becoming Gunatita-going above the gunas.** (5). Sattva is stainless luminosity, yet desiring happiness and knowledge, it binds the being, without leading to liberation. It is a golden fetter, as the knowledge it seeks is knowledge of the Field, not of the Knower. (6) Rajas is of the nature of passion, the source of thirst and attachment and thus leads to action and enjoyment of its results. Activity and ambition are its sure signs full of cravings and desires; schemes, plans and undertakings rule the life. (7)

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His intellect is perverted and he runs after name and fame and possessions. Tamas is born of ignorance, binding the being fast by heedlessness, indolence and sleep. Lethargy, sloth and foolish behaviour mark the man of Tamas. (8). Sattva is light, Rajas is action and Tamas is darkness shrouding knowledge and light, or killing action by inertia and error. (9). Now, sattva arises (prevails) having overcome Rajas and Tamas, now, Rajas having overpowered sattva and Tamas, and now, Tamas having drowned Sattva and Rajas. All three are either in equilibrium, or one must dominate the other two at a time: but all three cannot dominate a being at the same time, though all three exist together always.(10).

When, through every gate (senses) of the body, shines the wisdom light, know Sattva prevails. The senses five are the avenues of sense-knowledge. The Dharma of the mind in using the eyes is to see the forms of the Lord in everything the eyes help to look upon: if, instead, the mind excited by Rajas longs to possess and enjoy the object seen, the result is pain only. Sattva indicates dharmic use of the senses to increase the happiness of the being. It induces love for all beings which is real happiness, as surely as hatred of all leads to the opposite experience of pain. (11). Longing, ardour, unrest, avarice and impulse to strive and gain spring from Rajas or Passion. (12). Dullness, sloth and stupor, doubt, confusion, error and inaction and fear are the offsprings of Tamas. (13). Sattva is looking within, or intense internal activity, Rajas looking without, or intense external activity, while Tamas is blind and is the limit of inactivity, the foe of both Sattva and Rajas. If the embodied meets with death when Sattva prevails, he reaches the pure world of the knowers of Truth: meeting death in Rajas, he is born among those attached to action: and dying in Tamas, he is born in the wombs of the senseless, stupid, dnll men or brutes. (14, 15).. The fruit of Sattvic action is happiness and good: of Rajasic is pain and of Tamasic is further ignorance. From Sattva arises knowledge, greed from Rajas and delusion and bewilderment from Tamas. (16, 17). Sattva leads to the adodes of the Devas, the Rajasic, born again and again in the world to reap the fruits of action, while the Tamsic lose their

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His intellect is perverted and he runs after name and fame and possessions. Tamas is born of ignorance, binding the being fast by heedlessness, indolence and sleep. Lethargy, sloth and foolish behaviour mark the man of Tamas. (8). Sattva is light, Rajas is action and Tamas is darkness shrouding knowledge and light, or killing action by inertia and error. (9). Now, sattva arises (prevails) having overcome Rajas and Tamas, now, Rajas having overpowered sattva and Tamas, and now, Tamas having drowned Sattva and Rajas. All three are either in equilibrium, or one must dominate the other two at a time: but all three cannot dominate a being at the same time, though all three exist together always.(10).

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human birth, and descend into animals. All these don't lead to liberation, for which, man must become a Gunatita. The wise see that the gunas are the only actors, and higher above the gunas, is He, the Supreme, and attain to My Being. (18, 19). The wrong assumption that the soul is the actor, coupled with the fact that all actions end in pain, renders life incapable of ever avoiding pain, since the Soul is the absolute Master, and is above correction, thus leading to Fatalism in life. But, pain is avoidable, because Gunas are the actors, and gunas being subject to the Soul, can be controlled, thereby disproving the determinism in Nature. The sway of the gunas is only in the bias they give to the action, not in the action itself: hence remove the bias, by the Yoga poise, recommended by the Lord in chapter II, and you go above the sway of the Gunas, becoming Gunatita. That is liberation, freedom from birth and death. (20).

Marks or Characteristics of a Gunatita:- He views with perfect equanimity the three gunas, neither hating if they are, nor longing for them, if absent. (21, 22). Like a sojourner and stranger in their midst, he lives unperturbed, knowing that the gunas operate, and remains unconcerned. Alike in pleasure and pain, to whom the clod and the gold are one, the same in honour and dishonour, to friend and foe alike, detached from all undertakings, he is a Gunatita - the conqueror of the Gunas. (23 to 25). (Compare Chap. VI — 8 with the characteristics of the Yoga-yukth.) He who with fervent faith adores Me, becoming a Gunatita; he is fit to become Brahman and attains Me. I am that Brahman, I am the Immortal, Eternal Dharma, and I am the Absolute and the abode of Bliss. (26, 27). **Sattva** is the principle of understanding, knowledge and happiness, leading to calm balance and harmony, equilibrium and concord. By reason of its purity, it is a cause of light, virtue and clarity, It leads to contentment and delight. It is the preserving action in beings. **Rajas** is action, movement, creative endeavour, desire and its resulting action: but being mutable and unsteady, it has no settled result. It reinforces reason, will and intelligence in well developed mental beings. It is full of fever, lust, egoism, greed, excitement, and hence

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leads at first to sweet poisons, and then to lasting pain, grief and misery. Desire implies lack of possession, and even in the case of acquired possessions, it does not find right enjoyment, ever seeking, never stopping to enjoy. Ignorant seeking belongs to Rajas: It creates and creates and has an engrossing hold on all beings, compelling them to cling to life through action. **Tamas** is black-darkness, ignorant-inertia, a passive death, decay and incapacity: it suffers without any effort of mastering the situation. Left to itself, it would dissipate and soon disintegrate. It is found in brutes and idiots, only acting to injure others. It neutralises both the active energy and the bright intelligence. It is the root of bondage and the means of death in the end.

Chapter XV

The Yoga of the Supreme Spirit – Purushottama.

Men call the ever holy tree **Aswatha (Banyan)** as indestructible and eternal. It has its roots above, shooting upwards, while its stem, branches and boughs go downwards. Its leaves are hymns which whisper Truth. He who knows the tree is a Veda knower and all. The inverted Banyan tree is **the symbol for Samsara** which has its roots in the Supreme who is the source of all. Samsara is the ever-changing phenomenal world of Prakriti. Descending and extending downwards, it involves into grosser and grosser states. Samsara is eternal, because it rests on an unbroken line of descendents as well as on an unbroken series of births and deaths for the same being. Vedas are its leaves, and like ordinary leaves, nourishing and protecting the growth of the trees, the Vedas by their rituals, rites, and rules of conduct of life and code of morals, make the growth of Samsara their sole aim. Hence, the Gita's attitude (Chap. II—42 to 46) towards Vedas as not helping the Soul towards Its liberation from this Samsara. (1). Its branches shoot upwards to the heavens and also sink downward to the earth. The three gunas are its sap that nourish it. Its sprouts and buds are like sense-objects which quicken men's lives in the world. Its hanging rootlets seek firm hold in the soil (earth) beneath, symbolising the power of action to bind

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and enslave men to the world of samsara, i. e. sense life. (2). Like this tree, with one end, its source, high up in the heavens, and its other end sunk beneath the soil, man in samsara sees not his origin and end. Wherefrom did we take birth? What becomes of us after death? Between birth and death, we are allowed a glimpse, which is not very re-assuring. In this ignorance, we dare deny all origin, all basis and all support to this samsara. Yet, this tree of samsara with all its ills, can be cut down with the sword of **Asanga or Vairagya, dispassion or freedom from attachment to low sense-life,** so that man may reach his true goal, whither having reached, none return or fall there-from. The Primeval Purusha, the Father and First has His seat and abode there. (3, 4). Free from pride and delusion, victorious over the evils of low sense-life, dwelling constantly in the Self, with desires completely cast away, freed from the pairs of dualities, the enlightened ones reach the goal Eternal. Nor sun, nor moon nor fire illumine the Abode Supreme, as these are created beings which dissolve in Pralaya. His own splendour is the light, and life attains its utmost boon there, (5, 6).

When **the Kshara Soul,** setting forth from the Supreme, gets embodied in the world of manifested life, It draws to Itself from the store-house of Prakriti, senses and intellect etc, thus entering the flesh. It gathers these up as the wind gathers scents, blowing over flower beds, and links Itself to sense-things in life. Presiding over the sense-powers and the mind, He enables the life to enjoy the objects of the world, through mental experience, which results in pleasure or pain to the life. (7 to 9). Nature has implanted in all the senses the out-going tendency, and man's life and knowledge therefore are almost always external. Only very few turn their gaze inwards, and with them, the senses are shut in, being under control. These slokas describe **the process of manifestation** which is metaphysical, being a mystery. In the Gen. Int. under Kosas, we have seen that the individual Soul in the Anandamaya kosa along with the Vignanamaya kosa, impressed with all past samskaras of the life, forms the causal body or karana (cause) for the next life—the remaining

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three kosas having perished at death of the life. The once embodied Soul cannot be as perfectly free as the free Kshara, since it carries the karmic load of the life, like the wind carrying the fragrance of the flower, which is the compulsion for further embodied life. Answers regarding, how long is the unfree Soul to sojourn as disembodied, and what takes place in the interval between death and rebirth of life, differ materially from faith to faith: yet these should not upset our conduct in the present life whose sole concern is to live well, so as to serve our end about which there ought to be no doubt whatever, among the faithful.

Not, carrying any awareness of what takes place in the interval between death and next birth, wisdom should follow the practical advice given both by Lord Budda and Sri Ramakrishna viz, to think less and less about these matters. We find ourselves in a fruit garden, and while helping ourselves to the fruits, should we bother to know either the count of the fruits or of the trees or about the duration He will keep us in the garden or out of it? Very relevant and important issues like, who we are, who brought us into the garden and why, who is the gardener, and what our relationships are to him and his garden, whether the fruits are for our enjoyment, or whether they are forbidden fruits, what are the consequences of eating the fruits, who removes us, and why we are removed from the garden against our will? —all these affect in a large measure our attitude and conduct in our present sojourn, and the Gita answers them all unambiguously. The unenlightened and ignorant miss the Sprit when He takes to the body or leaves it: they miss Him also during the interval, when life takes pleasure in the body-form, activated by the gunas, all of which become plain to those who have the eyes to see. Holy beings perceive the Soul in themselves, but fools even though they strive, fail to discern Him, lacking discrimination. (10, 11).

That light, which, residing in the sun, illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon and in the fire, know that light to be Mine. Permeating the earth, I support all beings with My energy, lending all forms their life-force, and

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having become the watery moon, I nourish all herbs. I become the fire—the digesting principle, and abiding in the body of living beings, associated with Prana and Apana, digest the fourfold food; the masticated, the sucked, the licked and the swallowed food. (12 to 14). I am seated in the hearts of all beings From Me are knowledge, memory as well as their absence. I am verily that which has to be known by all the Vedas. (15). Purity of thought and deed has much to do with one's power of knowledge and memory: grief, passion, lust and anger affect both intelligence and memory adversely. In this world, **Being is twofold—the Divided One and the Undivided One.** All things that live are the Divided—the Kshara, the mutable, the manifold. The Undivided, Akshara, sits apart, being the changeless, the actionless and the unmanifest and the undifferentiated. But distinct from the Two States is the Supreme, the Highest Self, holding all, the Eternal, Sovereign, First, who fills all worlds, sustaining them. He is the Incomparable, the Primary, the Adishtan, and because transcending both the Akshara and the Kshara, is known as The Purushottama. (16 to 18). He who, undeluded, thus knows Me, the Supreme Purusha, he, all knowing, worships Me with his whole being and heart. This is the most secret Science Teaching) taught by Me. On knowing this, the being becomes wise, and all his duties are accomplished in this world. He is quit of all works and rests in Bliss. (19, 20), As noticed at the beginning, by **the Triple Status of the Supreme, with Prakriti as the subordinate executrix**, the Gita has propounded the Unique and most satisfying solution of the various riddles of existence, which at once appeals to our rational mind, working towards the strengthening of our will and the capturing of our heart, thereby leading to an unshakeable and understanding faith in Him who permits our reaching Him in all ways—through works, through intellect and through devotion, where our hands, head and heart in unison offer their utmost service in one accord.

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Chapter XVI—The Yoga of the Separation of the Divine and the Undivine — the Deva and the Demonaical Natures.

Spread throughout the Gita, we come across the Enlightened and the Ignorant, the wise and the unwise or fool, the Yogi and the man of low sense-life, their lives and actions being contrasted. Now, we have a detailed description of these **Two Natures** — one of **the Devas** and the other of **the Asuras** or Demons. The intimate connection between Guna and Karma — the nature of the act depending upon the nature of the guna producing it — is here brought home. **What is evil**, and how caused are vexed questions, but the Gita makes it clear that Evil is nothin but abuse of the power offered by Nature which could as well be put to good use, only the guna from which the act springs should be good. When Gandhiji's death from a fatal shot was flashed through the air, the reaction of an young mind, as reported was, "why did God allow the invention of the powder and the pistol ?" But, why did man put them to such evil use ? May be, evil is a temptation, but man is endowed with Buddhi, the power to overcome his evil inclinations that end in such abuse. As Marcus Aurelius said, it is within our power to curb our nature, and refuse to be guided by it, rather than blame external factors over which we have no control. We transfer the evil in us, to other things, which we abuse, by our wrong use of them, and thus deceive ourselves without hope of correction. Nothing in Nature is either good or evil but what we make of them by our own reaction or action. The mind can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven. The choice is ours - do we want to cultivate grapes or make grapeshots ? The gunas which give us our nature are divine. and ultimately all responsibility is His, but proximately it is ours, and becoming answerable, we pay for same in pain or joy. The Lord accepts full responsibility for the existence of dualities, and it is no use questioning why the same were caused? Our mental make-up is such that without a difference, we can have no experience at all. Good to be appreciated must have its opposite, evil : so with all pairs of opposites, and even life without death will become cloying and unbearable.

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Asuras are our animal and baser propensities, while Devas are our noble aspects. There is always in man a conflict between these two opposing tendencies. In our complacency we fail to reckon Brahman, the source of all power, who aids the Deva tendency in us.

The Deva sampath or nature consists of twentysix attributes, and is a wealth that is imperishable, leading to the fair path of heavenly birth. Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in the pursuit of wisdom and yoga, charity, governed appetites, sacrifice, piety and love of study, austerity and uprightness, Ahimsa, truth, absence of anger, peacefulness, absence of crookedness, compassion to all beings, uncovetousness, modesty, absence of fickleness, equanimity, vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, absence of hatred and pride — these belong to one born for a divine state, helping one to obtain liberation. **Fearlessness** stands first and foremost. Fear is caused through ignorance, and Abhaya dhana is the most sought after by all beings. Right conduct makes one fearless, while a fault or wrong, engenders fear: so does weakness; all animals share the fear instinct which makes them brutal and cruel. Man avoids fear only when he knows himself as divine. Fear, anticipating harm, arms one with wickedness, There is no room for passion in the deva nature. (1 to 3). There are six **Demonaical Qualities** which form the root for may more as their modifications. Hypocracy which is a mixture of deceit and falsehood, arrogance, self-conceit, anger, harshness and ignorance belong to one who is born for bondage. (4, 5). Every being has a mixture of these two natures. Birth does not determine one's nature: Arjuna and Duryodhana were blood — brothers, yet, poles apart were their natures.

From here beings **a detailed pen-picture of Undivine natures,** delving deep into the springs of their action. In the Asuric persons, there is neither purity, nor right conduct nor truth found in them. Enveloped in ignorance, they have no discrimination of right from wrong: they do not know the Self, apart from the body. Perverted they aver, "This world has no Law, nor order nor Lord: it is the union

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of lust and desire, having no other purpose; chance has brought it into existence". Holding such a view, these ruined beings, of mean intellect and cruel deeds become the enemies of life. Filled with insatiable desires, full of hypocracy and pride, holding evil ideas through ignorance, they work with impure resolves, becoming more and more lustful. They think that the world and life are only for their enjoyment: yet they are beset with cares, worries and anxieties that leave them no peace till the grave is reached. They work and work, dying in pursuit of willo the-wisp they never reach. Bound by a hundred ties of hope to samsara from which they cannot release themselves, given over to lust and anger, they strive to obtain by unlawful means, wealth in plenty, to glut their hot appetites. Scheming and planning, they build castles in the air, and what little they accomplish, their vanity proclaims to the world. They boast about their small deeds, about their ill-gotten wealth and power, and even resort to giving alms out of vanity to show off their wealth. Conceited, proud, stubborn and dead drunk with the wine of low sense-life, vowed to selfishness, force and insolence, they shame their kind in the forms they wear, as enemies of God, hateful and and hating. The worst of beings, they are vile and cruel, and are cast down by Me, again and again, into some devilish womb. They follow the path of their ruin, tending hellward, till they find Me and worship Me. (6 to 20). Self-laudation has no limit with them, and wealth purchases every thing for them — name, fame and power. They have full faith in the low-sense life and they hate all God-lovers. Seeing good qualities in others, they burn with jealousy: they humiliate and destroy others who will not slave for them. They take particular delight in injuring the good, just as Prahlad was done to by his own father. **Triple is the gate of Hell, destructive of life — Lust, Anger and Greed.** Slay these foes before they destroy knowledge and understanding. Hell is nothing but misery and grief in this life. He who avoids these three foes in life, walks straight to the gates of Bliss. (21, 22). The two following slokas extol the imperative nature of the injunctions contained in the Scriptures, whose disregard will be at the peril of the liberation

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of the aspirant. "Renounce all that the scriptures forbid: perform in good faith whatever they direct you to do." (23, 24). These slokas are considered by some to be interpolations, and such advice brings about a confusion in the mind of Arjuna who puts a leading question with which the next chapter opens. The fact is that the scriptures contain conflicting statements which bewilder one in an attempt to reconcile his action with them. Further, various interpretations are made by the custodians of the Shastras, each biassed in favour of the stand taken by the interpreter.

Chapter XVII
The Yoga of the three-fold Faiths,

If men forsake the ordinances of the Shastras, yet worship, keeping faith at heart, what is their condition? Do they tread the path of light, or passion or darkness? There is no direct reply to this question arising out of the closing slokas of the previous chapter, which slokas must be taken as a direction to the darkened beings just described, as a first step to divert them from their evil ways, to a path that did not forbid action done for the enjoyment of lawful pleasures in the world, though such a course will not avail for one's liberation. **The faith of mankind, springing from the three gunas are three fold.** The faith of each believer conforms itself to what he truly is. Faith takes the aspect of the guna which rules the being (1 to 3). **The Sattvic** have *faith* in purity, light and knowledge, they worship the Lord to attain liberation: the faith of the Rajasic lies in passion and action, desiring wealth and power for enjoyment, hence, worship the Lord of wealth and Power, while the Tamsic with perverted faith worship Bhuthas and Spirits. (4). See Chap. VII—20, 23. Chap. IX—25. Those who practice bitter penance, not enjoined by rightful rules—they are passion beset, proud in hypocracy: they torture themselves and Me too who is present within them. Misguided, their ignorance leads them away from the real goal (5, 6). Mortification of the body, when it is prone to rebel, is a common enough resort by some religious people, while some others resort to it to gain sympathy and therefore, money. All these are

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asuric. Please see Gen. Int. for Lord Buddha's opinion about self-torture, quoted under Five Kosas. Yoga or the golden mean advocated by the Gita throughout, is beautifully echoed in the following song of the nautch-girl which opened the eyes of Lord Buddha to the truth. "The string over-stretched breaks, and music flies: The string overslack is dumb, and music dies: Tune us the sitar neither low nor high, and we will dance away the hearts of men." *Edwin Arnold* (Light of Asia). **The food** also, which is **dear to each type, is three fold**, as also Sacrifice, Austerity and Alms-giving. The influence of the gunas on one's faith having been described, we study their effect on the food-tastes of the being. A man's taste for particular food is determined by the guna dominating him. Generally, meat, fish, eggs, onion, garlic excite the passions, while fruits and grains calm the mind. The food which increases life, purity, strength, health and joy to live, being well-seasoned, and comforting, becomes dear to the Sattvic. The food-front has a direct bearing on the mental state of the being. As is the food so is the mind. Food that is bitter, sour, saline, excessively hot, pungent, dry aud burning is liked by the Rajasic, and is productive of pain, grief and disorder. Condiments, cloves and pungent things are eaten in plenty. Tobacoo, Coffee etc., all meat are rajasic food. That which is stale, tasteless, putrid, rotten and impure is the food liked by the Tamsic. Opium, Cocaine, all intoxicants and drinks prepared by fermentation are Tamasic. So are half-cooked, charred and burnt food. (7 to 10). Freshly prepared food is the best. Tinned foods get stale, becoming poison after a time. **Sacrifice** offered without desire for fruit, conforming to the rules of conduct relating to same, and with firm faith, and as a duty, is sattvic sacrifice. This is not limited to ceremonial sacrifices only, but includes all unselfish action done without attachment (11). Sacrifice offered for the sake of the fruits and for ostentation is Rajasic. All Vedic yagnas performed for the purpose of a reward are rajasic (12). Tamsic sacrifice is that which is contrary to regulations, in which no food is distributed, which is devoid of Mantras and gifts, and which is devoid of faith; these are the Five characteristics that go to undo any sacrifice. (13). **Tapas or austerity** is of the

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body, speech and mind. It is self-discipline. Worship of the Gods, the twice born, the teacher and the wise, purity, straight forwardness, celibacy, and non-injury are auterities of the body. One common form of Hindu worship is prostration in which the whole body touches the earth. Worship by the feet is walking to holy places, by the hands is gathering materials for the worship: or adorning or offering the same to God. The whole body spent in the service of the poor and needy, not the rich alone for a return, is bodily austerity. (14). Words causing no wound, or anger or excitement, which is truthful, pleasant and beneficial, the practice of the study of the scriptures are austerity of Speech. Polite speech and kind words cost nothing to the speaker but have great effect on the hearer. The wounds caused by sharp words are incurable, not so the wounds caused by burns, which heal in time. (15). Serenity of the mind, large heartedness, silence, self-control, honesty of purpose are called mental austerity. Mouna (silence) is a condition of the Muni who meditates on the Soul. No sattvic action is possible without mental austerity. (16). Austerities practised with faith and without desire for the fruits are sattvic: while those performed for their fruits or for name, fame, power and show are rajasic. Tamsic austerity is performed to obtain asuric powers, for purposes of harming or destroying another, by raising evil spirits. (17 to 19).

Gifts are also of three kinds. That gift which is given to one who makes no return, and given with a sense of duty, at proper time, in a fit place and to a worthy person, that is Sattvic Dhan or gift Name, fame and praise are to be considered as returns, and the donor must not boast of his deed. Gift given with a view to get back same in the shape of name, fame or praise, and given reluctantly is held to be rajasic. Gift given at a wrong place and time, to unworthy persons, without respect and with insults is declared to be Tamsic. (20 to 22). **OM TAT SAT:** this has been declared to be the triple designation of the Supreme. Therefore, with the utterance of OM are the acts of Sacrifice, austerity and gift, always begun. Adding the Pranava OM with bhava and feeling, in all that you do, at commencement, will carry you thro-

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ugh, without any obstacle to your goal. *(See Gen. Int. for the virtues of OM, the magic Mantra.)* Uttering **TAT**, without aiming at fruits, acts of sacrifice, austerity and gift are performed by the seekers after liberation. TAT stands for and is symbolic of the Supreme, in the Mahavakya, Tat Twam Asi. All actions are done in the name of That and all fruits are offered to That. This is true renunciation. **SAT** used in the sense of Reality is symbolic of Him and used in this sense is an auspicious act. Sat-bhava is that which is eternal and unchanging amidst the changing,—the Essence which supports all phenomena, It denotes the everlasting imperishable Self. Hence, SAT means auspicious and good, and representing Absolute Existence, its addition has the efficacy of condoning defects in acts performed with faith and devotion. It purifies action, rendering it fit to the Pure Being. (23 to 27). Whatever act, whether sacrifice. austerity, or gift, practised without faith is Asat. The supreme importance of faith in performing anything is emphasised here. Insincere acts are a waste, being worse than not having performed them at all. (28). In Chap. XIV we get knowledge of the fundamental characteristics of the three Gunas: in this chapter, we have seen their almost omnipotent power to influence the activities of a being—his faith, food, sacrifice, austerities of body, speech and mind, his gift or dhan. The same is continued in Chap. XVIII also, testifying to the relentless power and sway of the gunas over the whole life of a being.

Chapter. XVIII

The Yoga of Liberation and Renunciation.

All good teaching concludes with a masterly summary and recapitulation of the whole ground covered, and this last chapter by fulfilling the same, deservedly becomes the most important one of this glorious and sacred discourse. For the last time Arjuna puts the same old question–the difference between Sanyasa and Tyaga, if both led one to the same goal of liberation. In Chap. III, he sought to know the better of the two means–the Sankhya way of renunciation of action (Sanyasa) and the Yoga way of the renunciation of the fruits

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of action (Yoga of Works). In chap. V. he repeated the same question, because the Lord had praised both the means as leading to one and the same goal, and got the answer that who follows one, plucks golden fruit of both. Here again the Lord replies to the same effect. Works done with a desire to enjoy the fruits thereof are Kamya Karma, and should be totally rejected, given up, be they anything, enjoined by the Vedas or Shastras. The Seers declare that Sanyasa is the foregoing of all acts which spring out of desire, while Tyaga is renouncing fruits of all acts. (2). Some have held all action to be sinful, leading to bondage and fit to be abandoned, while some make answer, "No, all good acts, such as worship (sacrifice), austerity (tapas, penance), charity (dhan, alms), must be performed and should not be given up. (3). I will now pronounce My sentence on this conflicting opinion." **Renunciation is of three kinds** according to the indomitable gunas. (4). Sacrifice, Charity and Austerity should not be given up, rather gladly performed, for these are purifying agents even for the wise. How much more should they benefit the ordinary beings? Action may lead either to bondage, or may become the solvent for binding traits. The fault or defect is not in the action itself, but lies in the mental desire, in the expectation of the enjoyment of the fruits therof, which if given up, any action is raised beyond its tainting binding nature, becoming instead a purifier of the being. (5). Therefore, even those acts considered as obligatory, to render them free from the tainting-binding nature, inevitable to all action, should be performed without expectation of any fruit, else they, like all works, become taint-bearing and a bondage. This is an overriding Law covering all actions.

Renunciation of obligatory action is not proper; its abandonment can only arise through ignorance and the delusion brought on by Tamas. (7). He who from fear of bodily trouble or other cause, abandons action, because it is painful, thus bringing about a rajasic renunciation, does not even obtain the expected relief of such renunciation of action – his object in giving up the act, being defeated. (8). These two slokas are a warning against people who readily take to San-

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yasa to free themselves from troubles and responsibilities, once lightly taken up by them, and then as lightly thrown off. Such was Arjuna's wrong resolve. What is insisted upon in the two slokas is that determination and persistence are required for carrying on one's obligatory duties which should not be given up lightly, either out of deluded ignorance or fear of the consequences on health, convenience, comfort or profit. All acts of self-discipline and self-sacrifice entail bodily suffering. **What are obligatory acts,** Niyatam or Sahajam Karma? Acts prescribed according to one's own conviction or choice, and accepted thereafter by him, become his obligatory duties, whether pertaining to his family, society. country or world, forming the framework for his Swadharma. All such duties must always be performed in the spirit (bhava) of sacrifice, tapas and dhan. The omission or non-performance of obligatory duties, or their indifferent performance must entail sin, must lead to bondage. That renunciation is Sattvic, which, while performing the obligatory acts, under a sense of duty and responsibility, as acts that ought to be done, abandons both attachment and fruits thereof. (9). An enlightened Tyagi, under the influence of Sattva, with doubts rent asunder, neither hates a disagreeable act nor is attached to an agreeable work. All works are equal to him who has no attachment to acts or their fruits. He performs them all as obligatory. Samsara belongs not to the Soul but to the Ego - self. The-body performs what obligatory actions it must. The intelligent being (Medhavi) has no idea of being the doer of actions, done by his body with which he never identifies himself. Being in the body, none may keep off action, hence by relinquishing the fruits, one has done his all and is a Tyagi. (11). (see Chap. III — 5.)

The fruits of action which are three-fold — pleasant, unpleasant and mixed — pursue a man of desire even after death: but they touch not a true renouncer (Tyagi). (12). Having pronounced in favour of action at all times, coupled with the injunction that all fruits of action must be renounced, the Lord takes up the explanation of **how action is wrought**. In Chap. IV — 16 to 18, He touched upon the subject, and now the details are filled up. According to the

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Sankhya, five factors go to make up the action. They are :— i. The seat or support or locus of action, the Body, without which action cannot take place: ii. Kartha or actor or doer of action—there are various interpretations, but basing upon Gita Chap. V.-9 and Chap. XIV — 19 & 23, the only actors are the Qualities, the Gunas: iii. Karanam or instruments are the sense organs and limbs, both internal and external: iv. The Power or energy aiding motion is the force of Prana: and v. Daivam — the Will or Law of the Supreme (or the Ego in the ignorant which attempts to work against the Divine Will). About factor (v) also opinions vary. Whatever action is performed by the body, speech and mind, whether right or wrong, good or bad, these are the five causes. All actions are manifested only through **the three means** – speech, body in case of all physical actions, and mind for actions, like thought and feeling: yet, the causes are always five, and there is no place or part in this for the Soul or the Supreme. (15). The ignorant conceive of the Soul as the actor, and see not the truth. The Soul is like a magnet, setting up a field of influence where Nature acts. (16). In whom the "I" is killed, that enlightened being, identifying himself with the Akartha or the non-acting Soul, even though he should slay the whole world, being bid to slay, he incurs no stain, no sin, and is not bound thereby. (17).

What are the springs or starting ground of action? Knowledge, the knowable (the thing to be known) and the knower (the cognising mind backed by Consciousness) are **the three-fold impulse**, motive or seed for action. The actor or agent, the action done, the organs or instruments performing the action are the three-fold components of the deed. Without the knowledge of the knowable by the knower, there can spring no action. The impulse or desire to cause action is brought about by the reaction of these three. The actual deed itself is wrought by the actor, the instruments and the particular action named by the commanding will. The knower knows about the knowable by means of the mind and its organs of knowledge, and action is also carried out by the same agent through its functional organs. The five causes of action named in sloka 14, are

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thus re-classified here, and on final analysis, there remains only **the triad as responsible for action** to be conceived as well as executed, viz. *Knowledge, the act done and the actor-knower*, about which the Lord offers further details in the following slokas. The objects knowable and the senses through which they are known as well as the instruments are all subordinate to the final triad. (18). **Knowledge, action and actor are of three kinds**, according to the (three) gunas governing them (19). **That Knowledge** is Sattvic by which one is enabled to see the one indestructible Reality in all beings, unseparated in the separated lives. The knower beholds the oneness as the essence behind the seeming diversity of the universe. Unity in diversity is his clear perception. All men experience alike, feel alike because of the common Mind and Consciousness. (20). Rajasic knowledge sees in all beings, separate entities, each of a different kind, and distinct from one another. This idea of separateness is born of the passionate nature which aspires for overlordship over the other beings, becoming blind to the underlying unity and consequent equality which it cannot admit. (21) Tamasic knowledge blindly clings to one as if it were all seeking no cause, deprived of Light, is narrow, dull and dark. Thus much for the three kinds of Knowledge. (22).

Sattvic or Right action is that obligatory act done without attachment, without love or hatred, not for its fruits but for duty's sake. (23). Rajasic or vain action strives to satisfy desires, impelled by selfishness and done with much effort, passionately. (24). Tamasic or Dark action is action done headless of consequences, of loss, of injury and of the capacity to perform the same. It is a blind act which hurts the actor himself. (25). There are **three kinds of actors**. One who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, endued with firmness and enthusiasm, the same in success or failure, is the actor of pure Sattvic nature. (25). Passionate, self-seeking, greedy, agitated by joy and sorrow, such an agent is Rajasic, a slave to his desires. (27). Doer of evil, unsteady and loose of heart, low-minded, stubborn, malicious, lazy, slow moving and despondent—he is a Tamasic actor. (28). **Intellect and Will** (Steadfastness) have also three-fold

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separation according to the gunas. (29). There is a big difference, between Western Psychology and Hindu thought. The Western Science treats the Soul as an organ of knowledge, dissecting it into consciousness, perception, memory, conception, will, effort etc., which are all mental states or functions, not pertaining to the Soul. Western thought is directed to know more and more about the Field, and less about the Knower of the Field. According to the Sankhya, **Intellect** is one of the 24 Tatwas, carrying the highest rank in order of importance, not only in the life of the being but in his emancipation as well. It is a function of the mind, and changes its state with the changes in the experiences of the being. It is the discriminating faculty which enables the being to know right from wrong, good from bad and to act correctly or otherwise. Knowledge is different from Intellect, being a power derived from the State of the intellect. **Will** is knowledge which is firmly held and unshakable, resulting in the ability, voluntarily, to direct one's attention and efiorts, effectively and for unlimited duration in definite directions.

That Intellect which is able to discriminate action from inaction, bondage from liberation, what must be done and what must not be done, what should be feared and what should not be feared is Sattvic (30), The passionate Intellect, even though knowing right and knowing wrong, what is good to do and what must not be done, yet, having no firmness and calmness, leads to perverse knowledge and acts, based thereon. (31). With the Tamsic the intellect becomes evil, enveloped in gloom, taking wrong as right, and seeing all things perverse. Virtues become vices, right is treated as wrong and false, and vice versa. (32). The unwavering firmness by which, through Yoga, the functions of the mind, the Prama and the senses are restrained and controlled, that will is Sattvic. (33). One, who from attachment holds fast to his duty, wealth and pleasures, desirous of enjoying their fruits, and so is passionately and steadfastly pursuing them, the will of such a being is Rajasic. (34). That stupid person who through his weak will is unable to overcome anything, cleaves to his sloth, his sorrows and fears, without giving up

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his self-conceit and foolish stubbornness, has a will that is Tamasic. (35). Hear now about **the three-fold kinds of Pleasures,** indulging in which, by dint of practice, one surely comes to grief and pain in the end. (36). Sattvic pleasure is good pleasure that endures, banishing pain : it is bitter at first as medicine to life, but afterward as sweet as nectar. It springs from the enlightened pure Intelligence and deep contentment. Pleasures of the palate and sex are hard and painful to give up, but when given up, produce everlasting good. Self-control is difficult to begin with. (37). Rajasic pleasures are painful, and arise from the contact of the senses with the sense-objects: though at first, nectar-like, are in the end a lasting poison. Polarity in Nature is an established fact, (See Gen, Int.) and there can be no pleasure without the hurt or pain which will soon overtake it. Wisdom lies in choosing the eventual lasting good, rather than the lasting hurt, by giving up the initial tempting pleasure, through self-control. (38). Tamsic pleasure is foul and dark, at the beginning and in the sequel, and deludes the life. It is the off-spring of sleep, sin and foolishness. (39). Whether on earth or in the Deva world, there is nothing that is not subject to the rule and sway of the three gunas of Prakriti: no body is immune from their power. (40).

The duties of Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras are effected according to the qualities planted in each. In Chap. IV—13, He made the Four Castes and portioned them a place by reason of their qualities and gifts. (41). Born of his nature, a Brahman's virtues are, calm serenity, self-mastery, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, faith in God, and learning. The Kshatriya's virtue is his valour, fire, courage, skill, open-handedness and noble mien as the lord of men. With the Vaisya, his duties are tilling the soil, tending cattle and venturing in trade. A Sudra's state suiting his nature is servioe. (42 to 44). The nature of a Brahman is sattvic, determined by the dominant quality in him, Rajas and tamas being more or less dormant. In the Ruler-warrior, Rajas dominates, subordinating Sattva, leading him to action, power and lordliness. Tamas is dormant. In the Vaisya, Rajas predominates but closely

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followed by Tamas, with sattva lagging behind all. He is a Sudra in whom Tamas dominates, with Rajas and sattva dormant. (*See Gen. Int. for the Fourfold Orders and Caste System.*) Whoso does with diligence and contentment, the work allotted to him, whatever it be, he attains perfection (45). Man finds perfection through worship; and duty rightly done is the highest form of worship of Him who is the source of all beings, and by whom this universe is pervaded. **Work is the worship that man can offer to the Supreme**—the dignity of Labour needs no higher authority. (46). Better thine own Swadharma, though carried with imperfection and without profit, than take to other roads for profit, ease or gain, fame or Name. None incurs sin for facing his own obligatory tasks. Let no man abandon lightly his own duties, though it bear blame, for every work hath blame, as every fire is wrapped in smoke. Only that man attains freedom from the bondage of wrought deeds who performs his tasks unattached, with desires dead, fruits renounced and with full Self-control. (47 to 49.) See Chap. III—35 and also Gen. Int. under Swadharma, the Key-Idea of the Gita. This concludes the lengthy discussion about Action and its varied and connected off-shoots, with which this chapter opened. The Lord summaries by recounting again the means by which man can have perfect Peace by attaining the Supreme. (50).

As liberation is the goal, the Soul has to issue out of the forms and systems in which the mind takes its limited pleasure. To exceed this and reach the Soul's absolute liberty, the Gita breaks down every limit and rule, opening out into a new and unique Spiritual Truth. In the 12 slokas (51 to 62), it summarises its teachings. There is some common ground to both inner and outer renunciation, the latter, viz. Sanyasa was the highest ancient thought, and which the Gita attempts to preserve, though passing beyond it, advancing to the real solution. To start with, is the enigma of human action, the apparently insuperable difficulty of living in the highest Self, while yet continuing to discharge our worldly obligations of life. To give up action becomes the easiest as the ancients

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deeided, presuming life and action in the world as an illusion, or an inferior movement of existence, fit to be abandoned. This, the Gita considered as not the best solution. Both the paths propose the renouncing of the absorption in the external solicitations of outward things, and both concentrate in arriving at an inner inactivity or passivity which is the first object of Gita's Yoga. Both the paths lead the being out of the lower ignorant nature, to the pure spiritual consciousness, but the Gita way still advances, till it completes the being in God, uniting his Soul with the Supreme. Before, after and throughout, man must be active in life, action being done as a sacrifice to the Supreme, and divine work, whatever its outer character or form, cannot bind man, having released him from the gunas of the Prakriti. All ancient wisdom had these in common—renunciation, conquering of self, spiritual passivity and freedom from desire. Modern man's increasing mastery over his instrumental Nature is hardly real, and is only complete when he becomes aware of his divine nature. The State of Brahman is reached by one who is devoted, with a heart grown pure, restrained and in lordly self-control of body, mind and speech, in diet spare, giving up all attractions of sound and senses, equal in love or hate, living in solitude, with will tamed, taking the vow of holy meditation at all times, quit of selfishness, passion, arrogance, impatience, anger, pride, unattached to possessions, calm and with a sense lacking nothing, he, endowed with the pure intellect becomes one with Brahman. (51 to 53). Pure intellect should result in an obdurate will to efface all but itself. Meditation aud dispassion help one to conquer all dualities. The Spirit deserts where there is over-feeding.

In the impersonal Brahman into which one disappears is a featureless oneness, according to the ancient path. There is no room or place for Bakthi, for there is none to be adored, none to adore — personalities being all lost. But, in the Gita, *Bakthi* is a large, inevitable and crowning portion of the highest experience, and through Bakthi the highest knowledge comes which makes one capable of liberated action. It is attained when the mind exceeds itself, and when the heart too rises in unison, beyond our more ignorant forms of love

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and devotion, to Spiritual Ananda — the heart's fathomless vision completes the mind's absolute experience. This is to know Him utterly by profound Bakthi. Action becomes quite consistent with supreme spiritual experience. Advancing from the Brahmic state, the being becoming serene, sorrows no more, desires no more. Equally loving all that lives, he loves well the Supreme who made all life and so attains to Him (54). By this love, devotion, worship and Bakthi, he has knowledge of Me as the Supreme and directly comes to Me (55). And by doing all actions, always lodged in Me, he attains by My Grace, the eternal and imperishable status. (56). According to 54, personality is dissolved in impersonality yet oneness with the Supreme is not reached. The being has cosmic love and becomes a cosmic benefactor, his heart is in unison with the universal heart. In 55, **devotion brings him knowledge**, and knowing is becoming That. Words are imperfect, languages defective and no description of That is possible. Liberation is synonymous with Self-knowlege. **That** is non-dual, unborn, decayless, causeless, self-luminous, indivisible, unchanging, destitute of all differences, the support, the basis, the womb, the source, the substratum for everything, the inner ruler in all beings who will rule the being when the ego is killed and His is the only power to overcome Maya (Gunas) which makes the world a perversion of Truth.

Sloka 56 asserts that in the end, it is **the Grace of the Lord** obtained by the complete surrender of the being, which works for liberation, covering up whatever defects, whether in works or in knowledge that may arise in the process. This is reiterated in sloka 58. "Fixing thy full faith on Me, thou shalt, by My Grace, overcome all obstacles: but if from egoism, you will not follow My advice, you shall perish". Grace of the Lord is the easiest and perhaps **the only means to surmount difficulties in the path to liberation**. And there is only one way to obtain that Grace— by self-effacement and surrender to Him. The Soul can never perish, but neither will it reach liberation, if obstructed by the ego, and that state of illusion and bondage is a state of its perishing. Mentally renouncing all actions as sacrifice to

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Me, living in the faith of Me, resorting to the Yoga of the will and intelligence. devote all thyself to Me. (57) If in thy egoism, thou thinkest not to act, vain is thy resolve, for nature will force thee to thy allotted work. (59). What from delusion, thou desirest not to do. that helplessly thou shalt carry out, bound by thine own nature, born of thy Swabhava (60) Our resolve or determination becomes futile before the power of our true nature which will constrain us to do what we ought to do in accordance with our inborn qualities. Arjuna was endowed with martial qualities, prowess, valour, skill and a sense of extreme fairness and justic, which befit him to act as the champion of righteousness, and it was not in his power to decline to act, as even aginst his will, the Will of the Supreme shall prevail. Swabhava which is the resultant of past karma is also the primary cause of present action. The present is only the growth out of the past and cannot altogether be avoided. Every one is born with certain predilictions, leading to certain definite lines of action, born of his Swabhava. See Chap, III — 33. There lives the Lord in the hearts ef all beings who maketh their deeds, driving them as machines to perform the set tasks. In Him take refuge, with all thy Soul trust Him, and only so shalt thou gain, by His Grace, the Eternal Peace. (61, 62). The above expresses the most intimate and complete living relation possible between Man and God. The high enduring place the Gita assigns to Bakthi is stressed with feeling This is not abstract philosophy but personal truth, proving that God is no impersonal Presence or Silence, intolerant of all relations, but assumes a closeness and intimacy of oneness with Him in all parts of our conscious existence. He is not here the personal Deity constructed by our mind to satisfy our limited ideal and desire, pursued by the normal man's religious devotion. Offering Arjuna the freedom to make his choice and decision in the matter (63), the Lord again expresses His concern for Arjuna who was precious to Him. "Being My right well-beloved, therefore will I once again repeat what is to your (Soul's) good and advantage. Hear the most profoundest of all the secrets." (64).

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The Lord never lets down His devotee, but tries His best to secure him from harm and wrong action. Yet, God will not act for His devotee whose freedom of choice of action, He always preserves. Herein lies **the mystery of good and evil**. In following Him lies good: in flouting His will lies evil and misery. Man is the author of good and evil, not God. The popular notion of Karma (Fate) as an external imposition by way of punishment or reward for our past deeds, is a completely erroneous stand. The Hindu Philosophy admits of no judge, for, we are all *THAT*, and consequently, there can be no punishment either, imposed by any external agency. There is no judgment Day. Error and punishment grow out of one stem and cannot be disparted. The Puranic lore of a Judge (Yama) holding the scales even and dispensing justice is a dogma born out of a creed to rule the ignorant natural man and the Asuric, who are unable to appreciate and enjoy the freedom of a rational life, unhedged by threats of an external dispenser of Justice. The highest mystery is spoken in two slokas as **the final message of the Gita**:– "Become My-minded, My lover and adorer, a sacrificer to Me, bow down to Me, and take My word, thou shalt come to Me. This is My pledge to thee, for dear art thou to Me. (65). Through constant practice of Meditation making Me the only point and center of thy thought and mind, thus becoming God-conscious, offer all thy action to Me. Look up to Me alone as thy goal and sole refuge and these will lead to thy absorbption into My being. Abandon all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I will deliver thee from all sin and evil. Do not grieve". (66). The Gita has so long only insisted on well-built discipline, on a clearly traced system of its own, based on the Swabhava and the Swadharma, and on the Sattvic law of life, and on a self-exceeding exaltation to a free spiritual Dharma, but now, at last, suddenly it bursts forth, and commands the devotee to abandon all dharmas, to surrender and take refuge in Him. Man has not to bother himself with personal efforts and self-discipline, nor, need he follow the rules and rites, which, within the narrow limited circle of his ego, are hampering him. He has only to surrender himself to the Supreme, who promises him complete liberation. Ego is Nature's own

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device to keep man in bondage, just as sex attraction and pleasure are her snares to secure her own end—the preservation of the race, at the cost of the being. Sex and Ego, in the words of Sri Ramakrishna, woman and gold (Kamini-kanchan), are the two hurdles to get over in reaching our goal. They have been planted by God's Nature. Why? He has set them up to serve a limited purpose, but ignorant man succumbs to them, and falling headlong as their prey, suffers terribly for his greed and fond folly, all through life, till merciful Nature in the form of another device, i. e. Death, again comes to his rescue, though only giving a temporary relief. Death is man's acknowledgement of his defeat, in life, at the hands of Nature. Hence, if man has the will and wit to conquer Nature, well and good, otherwiss, he has no other go than to seek God—the Master of all to save him from defeat, in the contest against Nature. The command to give up all Dharma is not a licence. To behold forms is the dharma of the eyes, and to see in such forms only the support or substratum of all forms, i. e. God as being the essence, while the external features should be by-passed as illusory and ephemeral. So with all the senses. See Him in all forms: serve Him in all forms. Both Dharma and adharma bind the Soul, and abandoning them will result in avoiding the bonds, arising therefrom. This concludes the Gita Teaching.

The Lord then directs that this teaching shall be kept out from those who have no faith, who do not worship, and who seek not wisdom. Whoever with devotion undertakes to teach this supreme secret among the faithful, he attains the Supreme. (67 to 69). He, who studies and recites this sacred discourse, thereby offers worship by Gnana Yagna (Wisdom-sacrifice), and those who listen to the same and live in the spirit of the Gita, become worthy of liberation. (70, 71) Arjuna who has been listening with an undivided mind, affirms that his delusion has gone and having gained Knowledge through His Grace has become firm mined to do the bidding of the Lord. His moha, which had impaired his discriminating faculty, has gone. Man's purpose in life is to annihilate this moha and to attain Self-knowledge. (72, 73)

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Gayatri Prayer — OM. I meditate on the resplendent, adorable and effulgent glory of the creator of the Universe—composed of the Earth, the Firmament (Sky) and the Heavens — and who is the source of all Consciousness. May He guide and enlighten our Intellect.

EPILOGUE

Dear Reader, The Lord of Yoga and other great minds have spoken to you—surely not in vain. The Gita is not for light reading or casual perusal, but becoming a constant companion, **is your Raksha**—the Talisman and Charm to ward off all evils, troubles and disturbing passions. Reading Sri Gita constantly and repeatedly, you increase your happiness peace and prosperity, every time. (XVIII—78). The Book is fit for your **Parayana**; never mind its language, *if you understand what you say.* Japa and Mantras have no efficacy when repeated parrot-like, lacking comprehension to unite the heart and Soul to the act of recital. For procuring the Sanskrit original, the best and cheapest is the bold type edition of the Gita Press, Gorakhpur, U. P. This English edition of 500 copies, having a mission to serve, is not a profit-proposition—its price just covering the cost (pushed up by the uneconomic quantity) and selling commission. Hoping for a speedy disposal of this trial edition, suggestions for improvements to be incorporated in the next print are solicited and praying for the Grace and Blessings of the Lord of Yoga, **AUM TAT SAT.**

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